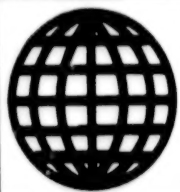


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**FOREIGN
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JPRS Report

Near East & South Asia

Near East & South Asia

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Brazilian Official Discusses Trade Relations

92AF0532A Tunis LE TEMPS in French
30 Jan 92 pp 3-5

[Interview with Francisco Rezek, Brazilian minister of foreign relations, by Mouldi M'Barek in Tunis; date not given: "The Debt Issue Should Be Settled Though a Political Approach"—first paragraph is LE TEMPS introduction]

[Text] The Brazilian minister of foreign relations, Mr. Francisco Rezek, is on an official visit to our country. In this exclusive interview with LE TEMPS, Mr. Francisco Rezek discusses Tunisian-Brazilian cooperation, the debt issue, the Brazilian community of Arab origin, Latin America as it faces the new world order, Middle-East peace negotiations, and several other Brazilian and international issues. Mr. Rezek is of Arab origin.

[M'Barek] Mr. Minister, how would you assess Tunisian-Brazilian cooperation, and how do you view the prospects for our two countries?

[Rezek] As you know, our political relations are excellent and they have not been marred by anything. But you also know that our two countries are aware that their economic relations are modest, and now intend to seize every opportunity for cooperation.

To increase trade between our two countries, we should take measures of a nature to intensify it. The Tunisian party should try to identify what goods or services it could sell in Brazil because, for the time being, our trade is in Brazil's favor.

The volume of trade between our two countries does not exceed 30 million dinars per year. Therefore, we should intensify our technological, scientific, touristic, and cultural exchanges.

[M'Barek] You came with a businessmen delegation. In your opinion, what are the products that Tunisia could sell to Brazil, and what are the opportunities it offers to Brazilian businessmen?

[Rezek] Currently, phosphates are Tunisia's leading export to Brazil.

However, exports could be diversified; there are other staple and manufactured products that the Brazilian commercial and industrial sector might purchase.

Besides, even for phosphates, the current figure could be increased; just imagine how important agriculture is in a country with an area of 8,512,000 km² and 150 million people. Our needs are huge. Tunisia can sell far more to Brazil.

[M'Barek] The question of the Brazilian debt seems to worry some observers. How do people in Brazil react to the problem?

[Rezek] It is, in fact, the largest foreign debt for a developing country. It has now reached a little over \$100 billion. But it remains in proportion with Brazilian economy.

Our gross national product exceeds \$300 billion. But the question of the Brazilian debt remains one of the government's main concerns.

We are currently negotiating the settlement of the debt service for the forthcoming months.

Private and public creditors are now confident that the government is determined to solve the question.

[M'Barek] President Ben Ali suggested to recycle the debt, i.e., to reinvest the amounts allocated to repay the debt in mutually profitable projects, in the country concerned. What is Brazil's position?

[Rezek] We have always thought that the foreign debt of developing countries deserved political analysis.

This question should not be viewed solely from the economic or financial angle.

Creditor countries should not overlook the importance of the political factor in finding suitable solutions to the debt question.

Besides, this opinion is shared by Mr. Boutros Ghali, the UN general secretary.

It is urgent to help promote development in debtor countries, so that people in the South will not be tempted to migrate permanently to the North. Besides, such a migration will cost more to the North, which could stop it only by erecting another Wall, similar to the one that was destroyed just a few months ago and brings back sad memories. Are we going to see another Wall between the North and the South!?

The debt problem must be settled through a political approach.

We are not asking for charity. We want to prevent this migration to the North which, in several European countries, is a source of discrimination and feelings that are quite reprehensible and sometimes remind us of the 1930's.

[M'Barek] The best informed among observers predicted a formidable economic boom in Brazil, but the takeoff was delayed. In your opinion, what was the cause for the delay?

[Rezek] It is due to the unfortunate conjunction of two factors:

—We contracted too many debts; and

—the Brazilian legal order, which was protectionist, not modern, and marked by nationalism, showed a lack of intelligence.

We are now determined to settle the debt service, and we are modernizing our laws to attract investors. Brazil is now on the right track. The Brazilian boom will occur soon and it will be commensurate to the size of the Brazilian economy.

[M'Barek] Democracy and development are closely bound. How will you reconcile economic demands and democracy in a developing country?

[Rezek] Democracy requires openness. The government must explain its theories. For instance, there are those in Congress (the Brazilian parliament) who still support the ultranationalist and protectionist theories that have already been proved wrong. We must convince these people, since we are in a democracy. This requires efforts and reasoning.

At present, people in Latin America realize that democracy is a sound base for any durable economic achievement.

What you are doing here, we are doing over there.

[M'Barek] Brazil has a large Arab community. Could you give us more details on the size, living conditions, and sectors of activities of this community?

[Rezek] Statistical estimates show that Brazil now counts nearly 150,000 Arabs who came from Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and a few Maghreb countries.

People of Arab origin, exclusively Arab origin I would say, like myself, i.e., with both parents of entirely Arab origin, number about 2.5 million.

But if you consider the entire Arab community, i.e., including individuals born of mixed marriages, the figure is close to 8 million.

Whereas Brazilians of German origin are mostly concentrated in southern states, the Italians in Sao Paulo, the Ukrainians in the state of Parana, Arabs on the other hand are distributed throughout Brazil. Even in Amazonia you may find a few families of Arab origin.

Their professional diversification is also remarkable. At first, they were traders; then they went into industry.

Starting in 1930-1940, they formed large industrial groups and, little by little, they asserted themselves in other professions, such as medicine, technology.

In Brazil, we have what we call "superstars" of medicine who are of Arab origin.

Brazilians of Arab origin hold key positions in the political class and even in the Church. They are numerous in the Brazilian parliament, which counts tens of senators and deputies of Arab origin.

Brazilian of Arab origin also hold important positions in the Brazilian Supreme Court, which is small in number but whose actual powers are huge.

They also hold government positions; they have held the Ministries of Justice, Finance, etc.; and as for me, I am the first one to be in charge of the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

[M'Barek] What are Brazil's relations with Arab countries, in particular the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] and the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council]?

[Rezek] We have excellent political relations with Arab countries.

Our relations have always been cloudless.

But the time has come to give our relations an economic expression.

You know that I was in Morocco just before coming to Tunisia. Traveling with me is a large delegation of businessmen who are trying to identify projects in your country.

Usually, you know, I am accompanied by diplomats, but this time a delegation of Brazilian industry's top men came with me to Tunis, to try and boost our economic relations.

Certainly, the joint Tunisian-Brazilian commission will not be set up immediately, because of certain formalities, but we are going to sign agreements that will make it possible to strengthen our cooperation.

[M'Barek] What is Brazil's point of view concerning the Middle East peace talks and the rights of the Palestinians?

[Rezek] We know that this is a problem that is hard to solve. We place much hope in these talks, which meet with difficulties every day.

The Palestinian question weighs heavily on mankind's collective conscience.

I believe that, for the time being, in addition to the efforts of the parties concerned and their neighbors and friends, the major centers of political powers on the international scene are aware of the fact that there is no longer any justification for disregarding the rights of the Palestinians.

At the United Nations, Brazil has always supported the rights of the Palestinians, and we have a PLO representation in Brasilia.

[M'Barek] There has been much talk recently about the new international order. In your opinion, what is Latin America's future in this sphere?

[Rezek] I believe that our region is one of the zones that have not been helped much by the economic rules of the game, in recent years.

Your region, the African and Asiatic continents, too, feel frustrated, and they have been denied, in this economic game, their legitimate share of their labor and their efforts.

I firmly believe in the future of the United Nations, which must now constitute a main line of international solidarity.

I believe that after the cold war there are no victors and no vanquished.

We are merely witnessing the victory of the theories of multiparty democracy as a political form of government, and the triumph of competitive economy as a way to prosperity.

It would be disastrous to believe that the Cold war ended by creating a situation where there is only one political pole. Rather, we should think that the United Nations organization is the right place to solve all problems.

The United Nations has already won strength and prestige; we must give it still more credibility, with all nations. International political opinion must be convinced that the United Nations is serving the international community rather than one country, one group of countries, or any interest.

It is at the United Nations that we shall draw the new map of international society.

[M'Barek] There has been much talk about the North-South dialogue... What part does Brazil play in promoting this dialogue and in strengthening South-South relations as well?

[Rezek] We are enthusiastically in favor of intensifying the South-South dialogue.

We should reinforce economic complementarity among Southern countries that are separated by geography but share a common ideal.

I do believe in the South-South dialogue, which is becoming more pragmatic and less academic.

Concerning the North-South dialogue, it would be sounder and more honest to establish relations of mutual trust. We do not want the South to curse the North and vice versa.

Some countries—I am thinking mostly of some regions of black Africa—need assistance from their neighbors and other industrialized countries.

But developing countries like yours and ours do not need assistance... All we want is for the game of international trade to be played fair and square.

We are against certain practices, such as the imposition of artificial and protectionist tariffs, for instance to

protect domestic producers in the United States and in several other industrialized countries, especially in Europe.

We are against these practices, as they are detrimental to our exports.

The quality of the product should be the prevailing criteria. We demand that all should play by the rules.

[M'Barek] Mr. Minister, does Brazil feel closer to the Third World? Or does it see itself as part of the so-called Western world?

[Rezek] Our feeling is that we belong to the developing world. We should avoid these labels and clichés that were brought about by the Cold war.

At any rate, there is no longer a "second world" now that the Cold war is over; therefore the Third World should cease to exist.

We belong to a developing world faced with a social crisis that strikes at our conscience...

All citizens and all families have the right to a decent standard of living. We belong to this family of countries that believe that all citizens in the world have the right to a decent life. The countries that have not yet gained access to what they deserve must benefit from international prosperity.

This is how I see this new international order.

[M'Barek] One last question, Mr. Minister: One of the largest forests in the world, Amazonia, seems to be exposed to dangers detrimental to this formidable natural asset. What does Brazil do to protect it?

[Rezek] Since 15 March 1990, the government of President Fernando Collor has been deploying efforts without precedent in Brazilian history to protect the natives' (the Indians') environment and territory.

The Indians are nomads who need a lot of space. The government has marked out their territories and no one is allowed there, except Indians.

The (Indian) Ianomami tribe has a territory that is approximately the size of Portugal.

The present government makes sure that these Indian reservations, which are the Brazilian community's heritage, are preserved... It is true that, in the past, some governments have tolerated some private activities to various degrees, but currently the law is strict.

Tens of heads of states and governments and hundreds of delegations will meet in Rio next June for the "International Conference on Development and the Environment." They will have a chance to visit Amazonia and they will see the pristine condition of this huge green area...

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

GCC Plans Joint Naval Reconnaissance Force

92AE0250A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 6 Feb 92 p 8

[Article by AL-HAYAH military correspondent: "GCC Countries Planning Ownership of Joint reconnaissance Force; Naval Reconnaissance, Patrol Aircraft; Program First of Kind for Gulf Defense Cooperation"]

[Text] Several U.S. and European defense and industrial circles are expressing great interest in a program that Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries are presently said to be studying to purchase a fleet of aircraft for reconnaissance, naval patrols, anti-ship, and antisubmarine purposes to be used in the framework of a joint Gulf command. This would be similar to the program under which NATO countries use their joint fleet of Boeing E-3 Sentry strategic air warning and reconnaissance aircraft (AWACS).

At the present time, GCC countries have a joint ground force framework in the Gulf rapid intervention force, known as the Peninsula Shield Forces. They have another common framework in an air defense system centered on AWACS aircraft belonging to the Saudi Royal Air Force, whose missions cover the airspace of the entire Arabian Peninsula.

However, this is the first time for GCC countries to consider building a separate, joint air fleet under the defense cooperation agreement framework provided for by the GCC. If the program is actually approved and implemented in joint form, it will also be the first time that it obtains that particular aircraft, trains manpower for it, and employs it in a joint format under a unified operations command.

Iraq-Iran War Experience

The interest of Arab Gulf countries in obtaining an air capacity for anti-ship and antisubmarine naval patrols is not new. It goes back to the eighties, and the Iraq-Iran war in particular, which at that time highlighted the importance of this vital aspect of defensive operations. For a number of years, the disputing parties exchanged attacks directed at each other's petroleum facilities and maritime transport activity, and from time to time these attacks were extended to include ships and facilities of neighboring countries.

At one time during the eighties, this component was part of plans that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia implemented to build its air force under what was known by the project name "al-Sawari" ["masts;" also the name of an early Islamic battle] conducted in cooperation with France. This resulted in transforming the royal Saudi fleet into one of the most important naval forces operating in the Middle East region and currently the most modern. At that time, the French hoped to convince the Kingdom to obtain long-range reconnaissance and naval patrol aircraft of the Atlantic-2 type, the most modern

produced by the French and European aviation industry. This was to be a complementary part of the Masts program, however it never came about at that time.

Present Capabilities

Currently, GCC naval patrol, anti-ship, and antisubmarine capabilities are concentrated in attack helicopters, including some aircraft based on warships and others that operate from coastal bases. The Saudi Royal Navy employs Dauphin-2 helicopters armed with air-to-surface Exocet anti-ship missiles. Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates [UAE], and the Sultanate of Oman use Super Puma helicopters armed with Exocet missiles, while Qatar uses British-made Commando helicopters, likewise armed with Exocet missiles. Bahrain uses Dauphin-2 helicopters outfitted with AS-15 missiles.

Iran is currently the only country in the Gulf that uses long-range naval patrol aircraft, since it still has one or two P-3 Orions of an original five of these American-made aircraft that it obtained during the reign of the late Shah.

Now, the GCC specifically needs this type of long-range aircraft capable of surveying vast areas of coastline, territorial waters, and the high seas 24 hours a day to ensure the protection of the vital resources located there, to defend existing facilities, and to protect strategic naval lines of communication from hostile ship or submarine activities to which they might be exposed.

Ordinarily, or most of the time, anti-ship and antisubmarine naval patrol aircraft are modified medium-or heavy-transport planes outfitted with a full complement of radar and electronic equipment, enabling them to carry out their mission to detect ship and submarine activity at long distances and under varying weather conditions. In executing these missions, they usually fly long distances for several hours at low speeds and low altitudes. They are usually equipped with various types of anti-ship and antisubmarine weapons and ammunition, such as air-to-surface missiles, naval mines, torpedoes, and depth charges. The most important aircraft in the world now executing such missions are America's P-3 Orion, Britain's Nimrod, France's Atlantic, and the Soviet Ilyushin-38.

Strategic Importance

Western defense sources say that any deal GCC countries enter into to equip themselves with anti-ship and antisubmarine naval patrol aircraft will attract the same amount of attention as major contracts in the past by countries of the region, such as Saudi Arabia's AWACS deal with the United States at the beginning of the eighties. This is because of the strategic nature that characterizes operation of these aircraft, as well as the technical and financial magnitude of any deal of this kind.

These sources estimate that in practical terms, in the event the GCC actually approves the program, Gulf

states may need as many as eight to 10 such aircraft. The total cost of the program would approach not less than \$5 or \$6 billion, taking into consideration the costs of training, equipping, operation, integration, maintenance services, facilities construction, and the necessary infrastructure to make a technically and operationally advanced joint air fleet permanent.

Consequently, signs of competition are already starting to appear among world producers of this type of aircraft, even before the GCC shows any official intention to go ahead and implement the program. America's Lockheed Corporation, producer of the P-3 Orion, believes it has the best chance of winning contracts under the program, should it be confirmed, because this plane is currently the backbone of the U.S. Navy and a large number of NATO forces. For their part, the French are also expressing a great deal of confidence that the GCC will decide to select their Atlantic 2 aircraft, considered one of the most advanced and up-to-date planes of its type in this field. At the same time, Holland's Fokker Corporation has entered the competition with its Fokker-50 Enforcer, a modified version of the medium-range Fokker-50 transport. During the recent Dubayy International Air Show, the Spanish-Indonesian consortium CASA/IPTN [industri Pesawat Terbang Nusantara] was also very eager to display the modified version of the CN-235 medium-range transport it produces, which is specially equipped for reconnaissance, anti-ship, and antisubmarine naval patrol missions.

Defense Priority

It is not yet entirely clear when the GCC is expected to make an official decision to move forward with the implementation of this program. However, Western defense sources say that the experience and lessons of the Gulf war contributed greatly to concentrating interest on strategic coastal and sea lane defense, and that this element now occupies an top spot on the GCC list of basic defense priorities. The sources add that these factors make it likely that GCC leaders will soon decide to establish this joint air force for anti-ship and antisubmarine naval patrol, at which time the real competition will begin, as the GCC selects the type of aircraft required and awards contracts for the important deals anticipated in order to build and put this force into actual service by the mid-nineties.

Egyptian-Sudanese Border Dispute Reviewed

92AF0483A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
25 Feb 92 p 38

[Article by Fahmi Huwaydi: "Hala'ib, Buried Mine Between Egypt, Sudan"]

[Text] Hala'ib [also known as Halayib] is the name of a land mine buried deep within Egyptian-Sudanese relations, within the border minefield upon which the Arab nation lies from the Arabian Gulf to the Atlantic Mediterranean.

To be more precise, Hala'ib is the next-to-last indicator of the crisis between the two countries. After that, something will happen what no one in Egypt or Sudan wants, or rather, no one in the entire Arab world. Therefore, from our previous reports, we have learned that opening the Hala'ib file means calling for maximum self-pressure and wisdom on both sides. It is an assumption that has proven true over the past three decades, whenever the Hala'ib crisis has turned critical.

It was an attention-getting coincidence. Last week, we were hearing about a border crisis in the Gulf region, one that is worsening between Qatar and Bahrain. Then this week, we found ourselves facing another border dispute between Egypt and Sudan, which has escalated in the wake of the Sudanese Government's agreement with a Canadian firm to explore for oil in the Hala'ib area. This caused multiple reactions in Cairo, which looked at Khartoum's conduct as infringing on Egyptian sovereignty over that area. As a result of a calm and cautious exchange of arguments between the two capitals through public statements, agreement was reached to arrange for a visit to Cairo by the deputy chairman of the Salvation Revolution Command Council, Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih, to discuss the matter and contain the crisis.

This is not the first time. Our generation can recall that it exploded in 1958, during the Ummah Party's government, led—at that time—by 'Abdallah Khalil, when the Sudanese press reported that Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir's army had crossed the Sudanese border. Khartoum submitted a complaint to the UN Security Council, which kept the problem on its agenda until it was resolved in negotiations between the two countries. (The complaint was subsequently withdrawn in 1971). At the time, it was said that the Ummah Party government, which had sensitivities toward Egypt, raised the matter for electoral reasons. The dispute had escalated over whether Hala'ib's population was entitled to vote in the parliamentary elections that were scheduled to be held on 27 February of that year, or whether it was entitled to vote in the referendum concerning establishing the United Arab Republic and the election of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir as its president.

The Ummah Party government won the election battle, gaining the majority of votes, especially after President 'Abd-al-Nasir backed off and the effects of the crisis passed. No referendum was held in Hala'ib. Since then, the issue has raised its head from time to time, but was dealt with calmly and quickly buried. For example, Sudan announced in 1972 the establishment of the Red Sea Province, including certain areas that Egypt considered under its sovereignty, including Hala'ib. However, the crisis escalated unexpectedly in 1986, also under the aegis of the Ummah Party, led by al-Sadiq al-Mahdi. The Sudanese press reported that Egyptian forces had penetrated deeply into Sudanese territory, and the border issue was once again opened between the two countries. However, containment efforts succeeded in overcoming and calming the crisis. That situation continued until the

crisis reappeared in a new form, not based on the entry of forces, but on rights of exploitation and monopolization.

The issue of sovereignty over Hala'ib continues, but what is changing is the pretext to bring it up.

What Is The Origin of This Issue?

Historically, Sudan had no defined border with Egypt. The first delineation of that boundary was stipulated by the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement signed in 1899 between Egypt and Britain. This agreement's first article stipulated that the border would be 22 degrees north latitude, which bisected Egypt to the north and Sudan to the south. Therefore, the border was drawn in light of astronomy considerations, disregarding natural and geographic features. Application of this decision uncovered certain gaps in the agreed-upon demarcation line since, as an example, the line divided the town of Halfa and its agricultural lands. Some tribal groupings were also divided, which caused half of them to be in Sudan, while the other half was attached to Egypt.

In that regard, the Egyptian minister of interior issued two successive decrees making certain adjustments to the demarcation line in order to facilitate administrative matters in the territories located on both sides of the boundary. Since that time, it was understood that there was a political boundary stipulated by the condominium agreement, as well as another administrative boundary that was relatively different from the political border.

The first decree was issued in March 1899, two months after the condominium agreement, and subjected the town of Wadi Halfa to Egyptian administration. The second decree was issued in 1902 and subjected the border tribes, especially in the Jabal Elba ['Albah] sector, which includes the Hala'ib area, to Sudanese administration. That adjustment was based on the fact that the inhabitants of the sector, which was rich in water, agriculture, and mineral resources, were from the Beja and Bashariyah tribes, the vast majority of which lived in Sudan.

That intervention between the political and administrative boundaries continued to be a source of tension that cast a shadow over the two countries' relations when Sudan became independent in 1956. While Sudan thought that its control over Hala'ib and the Jabal Elba sector came from exercising sovereignty, Egypt continued to maintain its right of sovereignty. It considered Sudan's rights to be limited to administrative affairs.

What Do the Two Sides Say?

The points of view and evidence upon which their positions are based continue for both sides. I had the opportunity to become acquainted with that evidence during a broad dialogue held in Cairo in 1989, regarding Egyptian-Sudanese relations, in which I participated. I

wrote about some of its aspects in the pages of AL-MAJALLAH at that time, in an article entitled "Egyptian-Sudanese Glasnost." The disparity in points of view make worthwhile reading.

First, the Sudanese points of view: Sudan rests its case on the following arguments and considerations:

- The 1899 agreement signed between Egypt and Britain, which drew the two countries' boundaries, was non-binding, because only one of the parties to this dispute signed it.
- The decisions issued by the Egyptian minister of interior in 1899 and 1902 were tantamount to amending the 1899 agreement.
- The administrative boundary is, in fact, of primary importance in delineating the border of the two countries, since the 22nd parallel has no general value as the boundary. In addition to that, all changes to this arbitrary line were intended to deal with its faults, in order not to subject the same tribes to multiple administration. Sudan's current border ensures that.
- With the exception of very slight changes, that boundary has continued intact since the decrees of 1899 and 1902.
- Sudan's current border, which has continued under the administration of consecutive Sudanese governments, was confirmed in the Anglo-Egyptian Accord concluded in 1953, and in the constitution of the transitional period that followed. It stipulated that Sudanese territory included territories that were identified by the name "Anglo-Egyptian Sudan" before the constitution became valid.
- The Egyptian elections, including the referendum of 1956 on the presidency of the republic, excluded those areas because they were Sudanese, while those areas were included in Sudanese elections, including the self-determination elections held under the supervision of an international commission on which Egypt was represented.
- The prime minister of Sudan made it clear to the two condominium nations on Sudan's independence day, in early 1956, that his country reserved the right not to be bound by any treaty or agreement ratified on its behalf prior to independence, unless the government of Sudan ratified it after independence. It would have been appropriate for Egypt, if it had views in opposition to this matter, to have submitted them before independence, or after it received the Sudanese prime minister's speech dated 3 January 1969.

The Egyptian point of view is represented as follows:

- The political boundary between the two countries is basically founded on the 1899 agreement. It is an international agreement that must be respected by Sudan. The statement made by the Khartoum government early in its independence does not change its status, that is, not being bound by previous agreements unless it consented. That statement is unilateral and non-binding internationally. Accordingly, the line to which Egypt adheres is the 22nd parallel.

Any modification in this boundary must be done by a clear international agreement between the two governments.

- The administrative adjustment of certain disputed areas, which was done in 1899, was no more than a mere decision from the minister of interior, who does not have the power to speak for the Egyptian Government in international matters, or to bind the government in that regard. His decisions were intended to be purely administrative adjustments.
- The evidence for that is the so-called 1902 Agreement, which was also a decision of the interior minister. This agreement discussed Bedouin areas of Sudan and Egypt. It was intended to make arrangements to regulate the process of administrative supervision by the two countries over the tribes within the area, where some were under Egyptian administration and others under Sudanese administration.
- The Sudanese view that it has acquired sovereignty over those areas by exercising sovereignty over them for more than 80 years is rejected, because Sudan did not enjoy actual sovereignty before its independence in 1956. The Egyptian Government had the sovereignty, and the bilateral government of Sudan and Britain acted on its behalf in the area of administration.
- The text of the interim Sudanese constitution, issued in 1953, stipulated in Article II that Sudan occupies that area that was well-known by the name Anglo-Egyptian Sudan directly before this constitution became effective, and that the term Anglo-Egyptian Sudan was confirmed by the 1899 agreement, which also made it clear that Sudan's border ended at 22 degrees north. Moreover, it is incorrect to depend on a national constitution to get out of international obligations.
- The Sudanese elections, held in those areas in application of the self-determination agreement of 1953, cannot be used as evidence of Sudanese control over them, because those elections were administrative, not political. The participation of Egyptian territories adjoining Sudan in administrative elections is a form of participation of the native population in local administrative areas and, in any case, cannot be considered participation on their part in Sudan's political system. Egypt lodged a protest after Sudan's independence, when Egypt learned that it was the intention of the Sudanese Government to hold political elections in Egyptian areas administered by the Sudanese Government.
- The Egyptian Government's not holding elections in those Egyptian areas, which were administered through Sudan, does not constitute evidence that the Egyptian Government had abandoned its sovereignty over them, because holding elections is not the only manifestation of sovereignty. It is customary to govern certain areas, especially border areas, in accordance with special regulations that are appropriate for their nature and the circumstances of their inhabitants. In addition, there were legal and administrative

obstacles preventing the holding of elections in a normal atmosphere, in view of the bilateral administration.

Proving Presence on the Ground

The matter is not limited to legal or political claims adopted by each side in order to counter the other. Available information indicates that the two countries have been trying, since the problem emerged after Sudan's independence, to reinforce their de facto presence as a point of departure for their right to sovereignty.

Sudan's Efforts

- Since 1958, the Khartoum government has granted licenses to explore for oil and minerals in that region to several Sudanese firms. It has also contracted with several foreign firms for the same purpose: a subsidiary of Standard Oil of California, with whom a contract was concluded in 1974; the Texas Eastern Company, which was granted a four-year renewable license in December 1981; and the English Manx Company to explore for gold, whose agreement was signed in 1986.
- Since 1962, work has continued to keep the land route between Port Sudan and Hala'ib serviceable.
- A Sudanese firm was formed for various industries in Hala'ib.
- Elements of the Sudanese Border Guard are present in the area.
- A Sudanese police post was established in [Jabal] Elba in April 1966, as well as one in Shalatayn in August of that year. The Sudanese flag was raised over them, and the two areas are within the disputed triangle that contains Hala'ib.
- The Sudanese Red Sea Province was established in November 1972, comprising the territory considered to be within Egyptian sovereignty in Hala'ib, Shalatayn, and Elba.
- A Sudanese school has been established, which contains a number of Egyptian students who study the Sudanese curricula. Some Sudanese teachers work in this school.
- There is a small medical unit and post and telegraph offices belonging to the Government of Sudan.

The following pertains to the Egyptian presence in these areas:

- The inhabitants in the area and on both sides of the border are from the [al-'Ababadah] and al-Bashariyah tribes. Some 5,000 of them carry Egyptian ration cards, while others carry dual citizenship and Egyptian identity cards.
- There is a "national" office for Egyptian mail and an Egyptian Ministry of Agriculture anti-locust office, in which a number of engineers and workers are employed.
- In 1954, the Egyptian Elba Mining Company was established. It operated until it was officially registered in 1963 and merged with one of the public

sector firms in Egypt, the al-Nasr Phosphate Company. This firm continued its manganese production until 1985, when Sudan refused to permit the transport of raw material outside of the area. (Some 25 workers and officials work for the company.)

- During 1974, Egypt established 12 observation posts between the village of Shalatayn and the Elba area (a distance of 10 kilometers). It had been decided to establish 24, but the Sudanese authorities stopped the operation and demanded that Sudanese be appointed to those posts.
- In 1974, Egypt contracted with California Standard Oil company to explore for oil in Hala'ib, while Sudan concluded a contract for that purpose with one of that firm's subsidiaries, as we have previously noted.
- In 1983, Egypt established military camps and border posts in that area.
- In 1986, the Egyptian prime minister issued a decree creating nature preserves in the Jabal Elba area of the Red Sea Governorate, in view of the unique climatic and natural features that that area enjoys. The decree included the establishment of an Environmental Affairs Agency branch in the region, headed by the governor of the Red Sea Governorate. (Note that Sudan, on its part, established the Red Sea Province, which includes the disputed regions.)

There is another dimension to this picture that is difficult to ignore, because it starts from a strategic view of the issue. This is based on two parts:

1. There are strategic interests between Egypt and Sudan that would be threatened by any worsening of the crisis or unbalanced escalation. They imposed a need on the two countries to continue friendly understanding and settle this problem in that spirit. The issue of Nile waters and the two countries' national security represent the foundation of these strategic interests.

2. There are close human ties and practical considerations in the region that defy partition because, apart from the dispersal of the same tribes on both sides of the border, the nature of the activities upon which the region's society is based call for constant movement on both sides of the border. Fishing, trading, and grazing are in the forefront of these occupations.

Despite that, the fact that the two countries are dealing with what amounts to suspended border problems, alerts and alarms us simultaneously. These problems between them include pacification and resettlement, which could pass on whatever tensions are actually created. However, the source and cause of tension is not being dealt with, while I believe the mentality that defuses the mine each time is capable of removing the mine altogether.

It is a question that no longer has any mystery, because there is a fund of expertise in resolving border problems that is available to whomever wants numerous options, ranging between satisfaction and arbitration. Under each category, there are details and choices that international

law experts are well-versed in. It is both mutually fruitful and profitable to reach a satisfactory option in cases like these.

Friendly solutions to problems generate actual reassurance, and why not use these friendly sentiments that these problems go through every time, to decide them once and for all, so that we can close the door through which the smell comes and calm down without smelling it!

Analysis of Syrian, Iranian Military Cooperation

TA1203164892 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ

in Hebrew 12 Mar 92 p 1

[Analysis by HA'ARETZ military affairs correspondent, Ze'ev Schiff]

[Text] The missile parts from North Korea that were delivered to the Iranian port of Bandar 'Abbas are mostly destined for Syria, not Iran. Now the question is how they will be transferred to Syria: By some ship at sea, or by land, via Saudi Arabia, whose money funded the majority of the transaction.

The arrival in Iran of the North Korean ship with the missiles is not perceived in Israel as an American failure. If the Americans had wanted to intercept the ship, they would not have found it difficult to determine its location—with the help of satellites and aircraft carrying advanced electronic equipment. Even from a geographical perspective, it would have been easy for the American navy to conduct a thorough sweep at sea because of the Straits of Hormuz, had they devoted their efforts accordingly. The assessment is that, from the beginning, there was no American intention to stop the vessel. It was more an American war of nerves intended, among other things, to prevent the passage of the ship into the Mediterranean Sea, where Israel could carry out an independent military operation.

The question of how to transport the missile parts and equipment to Syria now stands before the Iranians and the Syrians, who have cooperated militarily for quite some time. It is difficult to do everything via aircraft. One possibility is that an Iranian vessel, or a vessel sailing under another flag, will do the job. The loading of the ship and such a route can be detected with satellites. Another, more certain way is to carry out the transfer over land. It is difficult to assume that Saudi Arabia, with whose funds the Syrians financed part of the deal, will refuse the passage of missiles through its territory. From Saudi Arabia, the shipment will reach Syria via Jordan.

From this event, one can deduce that military cooperation between Iran and Syria exists. This cooperation encompasses various areas: beginning with granting the Iranians permission to operate a logistical link with the Revolutionary Guards positioned in Lebanon, via Damascus, and to assist Hizbullah; and ending with military

coordination and perhaps even the joint production of surface-to-surface missiles in the future.

Damascus is attached to Iran and enjoys this military cooperation: Iran allocates massive sums of money toward the reorganization of its military and to the development of its capability in the area of nonconventional weapons—including surface-to-surface missiles. Iran possesses vast resources, large manpower reserves and the drive to fill a decisive role in the Persian Gulf and beyond. Damascus is likely to profit from this success.

Saudi-Moroccan Investment Projects Noted

92P40154A London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic
11 Mar 92 p 62

[Excerpt] In a statement to AL-MAJALLAH, 'Abd-al-Aziz Muhammad al-Turki, chairman of the board of the Saudi-Moroccan Growth Investment Company, confirmed that the coming session of the company's board of directors, which will take place in Casablanca near the end of April, will announce the working plans of a number of investment projects that the company will undertake. Concurrently, the board of directors will take action to make contacts to attract investors to the company's projects, especially investors from Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and some Arab and foreign countries.

Turki said that the company's investment opportunities are vast, comprising the largest number of beneficiaries in many growth areas, such as rural development, industry, tourism, real estate, and services. The company expects to make a profit and be economically viable. [passage omitted]

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Cost of Living Study for Residents of Territories

92AE0247b Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 12 Jan 92
p 4

[Text] The regular monthly study prepared by the Palestinian Center for Development and Labor Studies to estimate the cost of purchases of a Palestinian urban family of four to six members for the last six months of 1991, has shown the following:

First: The cumulative increase in the cost of living index for the period from last June until the end of December, i.e., in the second half of 1991, was 11.3 percent, distributed as follows:

July, 3.5 percent; August, 3.9 percent; September, 1.5 percent; October, 1.2 percent; November, 0 percent, and December, 1.2 percent.

The total cost of a Palestinian family's basket of purchases last June was 1,896.4 shekels, but by December it had risen to 2,139.3 shekels, for a difference of 242.9 shekels.

Second: 1. A review of this study also shows that spending on food occupies first place in the breakdown of the basket of purchases, because most of the family's limited income is usually spent on foodstuffs. This is an economic principle; when family income goes down, the ratio of foodstuffs in their expenses rises, and when income increases, the ratio of foodstuffs in their expenses falls, because most of this income goes to purchase foodstuffs and consumer goods [as published]. The share of spending on food for the month of December was 33.6 percent of total spending, or 719.2 shekels; in June, it was about 35 percent, or 662.9 shekels, with total spending for June at about 1,896.2 shekels.

The total difference (a 7.8-percent price rise in food from June to December) varies among the various components of the food category.

2. Spending on all types of meat, eggs, milk, dairy products, fruit, and the greater part of spending on food amounted to about 461.5 shekels in June, a share estimated at 69.6 percent of total spending. In December, total spending on foodstuffs came to 480.9 shekels, making up 66.7 percent of total spending, for a rate of increase for these components from June until December of 2.8 percent.

In addition, prices of some components in the food category rose steeply. For example, the price of one kilogram of vegetables rose 39 percent from June until last September. The price of chicken rose 37.5 percent from July until December. Fruit also went up 22 percent from June until last August.

Third: Spending on home maintenance, rent, and energy consumption occupies second place in the breakdown of a Palestinian family's basket of purchases, representing 25.8 percent of total spending, or 538.1 shekels. The increase in the cost of home maintenance between June and December was about 9.4 percent. Power supply represented 18.7 percent of total spending on home maintenance. Thus, home maintenance expenses represent a significant strain on a family's budget and income, as it used to represent only 12 percent of total spending, according to a study made in March 1990.

The cost of the monthly rent for residential apartments is the greatest burden in this category. In December, it had reached 63.1 percent of home spending, and 15.8 percent of the total cost of a family's basket of purchases. The cost of renting residential apartments in that period rose 6 percent.

The increase in [the cost of] energy supplies from June to December 1991 was also large. For example, the price of bottled gas tanks for home use rose 40.9 percent, reaching 22 shekels, whereas it had been 13 shekels last July.

Fourth: The cost of services rose to 9 percent of the total over what it had been last June, and transport prices rose 14.4 percent from June until the end of December. Cigarette prices rose 5.9 percent, as well.

Fifth: Other categories of the basket of purchases rose by various rates; not one of them maintained its general average.

The above concludes that the prices—the “value”—of a majority of categories in a Palestinian urban family's basket of purchases increased, without any drop or even leveling in their average; and without any corresponding increase in the family's income. On the contrary, there was a marked decrease in Palestinian family income due to the constant curfews and strikes.

The goal of this study is not merely to demonstrate the rise or fall of the prices or the value of a Palestinian urban family's purchases, but to define the increase in the cost of living, which has such a great effect on the living standards, the economic and social life of Palestinian families, and the effort to raise the wages of workers and employees in various sectors. It shows the average income of individuals in Palestinian families to be 380 shekels currently.

If we assume that 1.5 members of a family of four to six members are working, then the median income of the Palestinian family is 1,245 shekels per month, or 41.8 percent of the total monthly cost of purchases. This is a dangerous sign of the difficult economic situation that Palestinian families in the occupied territories are enduring.

When we compare the costs of purchases of a Palestinian urban family of four to six members with an Israeli family of the same size, and compare the two families' income, we find the following:

1. The total cost of the Israeli family's purchases for the month of January was 4,240 shekels, while the cost of the Palestinian family's purchases for the same month was about 2,117.9 shekels, or about 50 percent of the Israeli family's purchases. If we examine the components of the Israeli basket of purchases, we find that spending on food equals 23 percent of total spending; spending on housing and maintenance at 26 percent; 15 percent for spending on transportation; 7 percent on clothing and shoes; 4 percent on miscellaneous; 7 percent on furniture; 6 percent on health; and 12 percent on schooling, education, and recreation. The Palestinian family's basket of purchases breaks down as follows:

2. Individual income in the Israeli family reached 2,900 shekels, and as we assumed 1.5 workers in every family, then the median monthly income for the Israeli family would be 4,350 shekels.

On the other hand, individual income in the Palestinian family amounted to 830 shekels, with median total income of the Palestinian family being just 1,245 shekels. This does not take into consideration incidental income for the Israeli family, such as its pension fund and children's old-age payments, and nearly-free medical care, which has no equivalent with the Palestinian family.

3. The drop in the Israeli family's rate of spending on food, with increased spending on other categories; unlike the Palestinian family, whose spending on food went up as its spending on other categories decreased, due to the decline in monthly income. Thus, this comparison and this reality reveal the tragedy of the Palestinian family's subsistence, which is threatened by an economic catastrophe, particularly in light of the rise in unemployment, which is over 25 percent, and which exceeds 50 percent in some overcrowded areas, especially the Gaza Strip.

4. According to the data and statistics of the Israeli Insurance Fund, the poverty line for an Israeli family with only two children is 1,645 shekels. The median monthly income of a Palestinian family of four to six members is 1,230 shekels, which means that, based on this data, the overwhelming majority of Palestinian families live below the poverty line. So this comparison and this reality reveal the tragedy of the Palestinian family's subsistence, which is threatened by an economic catastrophe, particularly in light of the rise in unemployment, which is over 25 percent, and which exceeds 50 percent in some overcrowded areas, especially the Gaza Strip. [repetition as published]

On this Basis, the Following May Be Recommended:

- Setting the minimum wage at 1,426 shekels, on the basis of dividing the total amount of living costs, and considering that there are 1.5 workers per family.
- Consider the pay scale currently in force in every establishment and company, to adjust the rest of the various salaries on that basis.
- Calculate cost of living raises every six months in various establishments and companies.

Costs for Various Components of Palestinian Family's Purchases in Last Six Months [in Israeli shekels]

	Food	Home and Maintenance	Clothing and Shoes	Health, Education, Culture	Furniture and Home Appliances	Public Services and Transportation
July	697.7	509.5	126.0	205.0	100.6	221.5
August	723.7	510.8	152.0	255.0	106.6	229.2
September	742.8	510.8	150.0	252.0	101.8	333.2
October	724.1	520.8	162.0	262.0	102.6	227.8
November	706.1	522.9	168.0	268.0	102.9	237.3
December	719.2	538.1	168.0	272.0	100.6	241.4

Book Critical of Israeli Islamic Movement

92AE0259A Nazareth AL-SINNARAH in Arabic
28 Feb 92 p 24

[Article by 'Ali Abu-Rabi'ah; includes an interview with 'Uqayl al-Talaliqah; place and date not given]

[Text] A book by Negev author and Likud Party member 'Uqayl al-Talaliqah, which accuses the leadership of the Islamic movement in the Negev of a breach of faith, is arousing angry reactions in circles of the movement.

In the book, entitled "Your Religion is Your Dinar [Dinukum Dinarukum]," the author states that the Islamic movement in the Negev signed an agreement with the Likud regarding the 1989 elections. According to the agreement, the movement pledged that its members would vote for the Likud in exchange for monetary support to renovate the al-'Ikha' mosque. The book attacks the movement, describing it as a conspiracy to incite Muslims to fight among themselves. AL-SINNARAH met with al-Talaliqah to clarify his motives for publishing the book.

[Abu-Rabi'ah] What are your motives for publishing this book?

[al-Talaliqah] I did so out of a sense of national duty and a sincere commitment to Islam, in the hope that this would be a positive sign and point to the right path and serve as a lesson to anyone tempted to violate the sanctity of Islam. Perhaps those who were enticed by material inducements will return to their senses, revoke permission to commit perfidy and vice, and turn to God in sincere repentance. I might call these remarks a cry of conscience and a necessity of duty.

[Abu-Rabi'ah] What is the perfidy and breach of faith which you discuss in your book?

[al-Talaliqah] Several days before the 1988 elections, I made a verbal agreement with the leaders of the Islamic movement in Rahat, headed by Shaykh Jum'ah al-Qasasi, the chairman of the movement and of the local council. The text of the agreement was:

- The Islamic movement pledges that its followers, numbering between 2,500 and 2,700, will vote for the Likud Party on election day, 1 November 1988. (The elections took place on 1 November 1989—AL-SINNARAH).
- Members of the movement, especially its leaders, will disseminate Likud campaign advertising publicly and openly by posting Likud campaign posters on their homes and the entrances to their neighborhoods.
- The movement's leadership will announce in the mosque, on 28 October 1988, within hearing of the people, that 10,000 shekels was given to it by the Likud Party to renovate the al-'Ikha' mosque in exchange for the movement's members voting unhesitatingly for the Likud, the only party to support the movement and fund its places of worship.

[Background] al-Talaliqah states that the 10,000 shekels were given to Shaykh Jum'ah al-Qasasi. He adds that the money came from his private funds with the support of the Likud and its promises to him [of reimbursement]. He also said that the movement's leaders asked that he pay the cost of the election advertising to be undertaken by the movement's members. al-Talaliqah maintains that he informed the Likud Party secretary in Beersheba, Ya'aqov Simonov, of this request. Simonov agreed to it, and a check for 300 shekels was given to each of seven movement leaders for this purpose.

[al-Talaliqah] The breach of faith began at the Friday prayer assembly. There was no mention at the mosque of the Likud Party and its support for the mosque. It was merely said the al-'Ikha' mosque had received a 10,000-shekel grant from the Islamic Waqf [religious endowment] through the office of the government's advisor.

At that point, I asked them to return the sum, because they had violated their pledge. However, after consultations, the movement's leadership emphasized that it would keep its word and vote for the Likud, and that if it did not do so we [the Likud] could take our money, which is tantamount to a deposit.

[Background] The author adds that the movement's leadership submitted, through him, a request for a grant from the Islamic Waqf. The author informed Ya'aqov Simonov [the former head of the elections department in the Negev] and 'Amos Gilboa' [a former advisor to the prime minister on Arab affairs] of the agreement, and they both expressed their pleasure. They met with the movement's leadership, headed by Jum'ah al-Qasasi, in Rahat.

[Abu-Rabi'ah] Did they vote for the Likud?

[al-Talaliqah] They revealed their deceit, deception, and hypocrisy, inasmuch as only 600 votes—not from the movement—arrived from Rahat. The movement's 2,700 votes were not cast for the Likud.

I kept my promise, but they proved their perfidy, breach of faith, and languor. I then said, in my heart of hearts, that they are committed to fundamental viewpoints based on dogmatic interpretations that I also hold. I quietly and humanely asked them to return the sum (deposit). They told me: We have deposited the money with the welfare society. They asked me for a week's grace period until the grant arrived from the Waqf. I gave them a week, based on an agreement with Shaykh Abu-Suqayr (the chairman of the Likud's office in Rahat). A week later, they denied having agreed to return the sum.

I resorted to dealing with them in a language they understand. They were forced to return the sum. The movement's leaders went to Mansur Abu-'Ajjaj, then the minister's advisor on the affairs of bedouin citizens. They relinquished the sum and ordered that it be transferred from the Waqf to me.

[Background] According to al-Talaliqah, Jum'ah al-Qasasi presented an apology after 'Uqayl al-Talaliqah waived his moral right, due to the intervention of Arab notables, "and I was forbearing and forgiving."

[al-Talaliqah] When Jum'ah al-Qasasi refused to return the sum, I warned him that perfidy and breach of faith would be of no use to them, and that the return of the full sum was inevitable, sooner or later. I told him that the prophet (God bless him and grant him salvation) and the Muslim community neither acted perfidiously nor broke their promises and agreements with the disbelievers regarding the peace settlement of al-Hudaybah. I told him: 'You are worlds apart from what you preach.'

[Background] The author accuses the leadership of the Islamic movement of baseness, atheism, deviation, and heresy!

He adds that Shaykh Ibrahim Sarsur acknowledged that their students and graduates of their institutions were responsible for this perfidious sequence [of events].

'Uqayl al-Talaliqah says that this acknowledgement was made after a vehement, varied discussion. He describes the Islamic movement in the country as a "political, reactionary, destructive, conspiratorial, perfidious, and materialistic movement based on an impulsive philosophy for implementing its temporal goals. It has adopted the Islamic religion as a means to promote its own interests. It has clothed itself in the mantle of religion and the sunnah [the statements and acts of the Prophet later established as legally binding precedents] to gain control of social positions and the reigns of power over Islamic public, material, and economic resources. It is not a pure, reformist Islamic movement. It is a spurious movement, exceedingly remote from the spiritual teachings of Islam."

Al-Talaliqah likens the Islamic movement to political movements that have appeared throughout history, whose goal has been to fragment Islam's unity, such as the Sassanian, Kharijite, and Batiniya movements, the assassins, the medieval monastic movement, and the Islamic movement in Egypt.

He attacks the movement's monopolization of religion, saying that it were as if its members believed that religion belonged to their fathers and grandfathers, and that Muslims outside of the movement were disbelievers. He claims that they are trading in what is holy to Muslims. He also criticizes their dress and way of receiving guests.

[al-Talaliqah] The movement claims that one must shake hands while sitting, and that it is not necessary to stand.

When a simple man comes, they shake hands while reclining, whereas when a distinguished person enters the room, they all stand simultaneously.

[Background] He calls for the elimination of the so-called Islamic weddings and festivals. He also advocates emancipating women, whose freedoms have been denied and taken away.

[al-Talaliqah] Our women suffer from repression and deprivation. They are sinking down under the oppression of coercive domination, psychological violence, and the grip of brutal tyranny. Some of the adherents of the new, Hamas school, which first appeared in the late 20th century, have imposed a ban on beautiful, embroidered, Arab folk attire, which may be the best attire to conceal the parts of the body that must be covered during prayer. They have replaced it with what they call Islamic attire. They have forgotten that this embroidered attire is an intrinsic part of our folk heritage. They have plowed under a legacy."

[Background] 'Uqayl al-Talaliqah calls for waging a holy war against this group (the Islamic movement), which has been foisted [on us] and is controlled by enemies from the West in order to fragment the unity of Islam and Muslims. He states: "I will raise high the banner of holy war against this hostile group. I will not retreat until I achieve victory or martyrdom."

Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish responds to the book, saying: "This man has been foisted [on us]. The greatest power in the world cannot fragment the unity of the movement. I prefer not to respond to this strange man, because I have not read the book." The leadership of the Islamic movement in the Negev has announced that it will study the situation and issue an official statement in the next three days. [boxed item]

Shaykh Ibrahim 'Abdallah Sarsur: There Is a "Hidden" Hand Behind the Book

Shaykh Ibrahim Sarsur, the head of the Kafr Qasim council, commented on the affair, saying: "I heard about the book only on Tuesday, when a delegation from the al-Talaliqah family came to Kafr Qasim and met with me and Shaykh 'Abdallah Nimr Darwish. They criticized the book, which they consider a fantasy, a swindle, and not representative of them."

Shaykh Ibrahim adds that this book is a falsification of the facts, and that he did not acknowledge any error on the part of the Islamic movement in the Negev, as claimed by al-Talaliqah. "al-Talaliqah places himself in an inappropriate position. I personally intervened in the matter at the outset. I investigated it well, and concluded that he is not truthful. Actually, he deserves sympathy. I have spoken with him at length. He apparently suffers from an emotional disorder.

"The publication of the book under these very circumstances indicates that he was compelled to write the book by a hidden 'hand' to achieve two goals: to contain the

Islamic movement, and to get rid of 'Uqayl himself via [placing him in a position vulnerable to an attack by] an Arab hand, based on thinking that the Islamic movement would mobilize armies against al-Talaliqah. However, we will not grant this "hidden" hand an opportunity to achieve its goals."

Asked what he means by "hidden" hands, Shaykh Ibrahim said: "These hands belong to parties that are neither from, nor related to, the Arab milieu. They undertook this action at this very time when we are moving toward closing ranks. They have done so after discovering that the Islamic movement has influence."

[boxed item]

Biographic Information on al-Talaliqah

'Uqayl al-Talaliqah was born in 1943 and grew up in Khirbat-al-Talaliqah, north of Beersheba. He finished high school in al-Tirah in 1968, and worked in education. In 1972, he was appointed principal of al-[Luqiyah] school. In 1981, he had a disagreement with the regional school inspector at that time, 'Atif Khatib. He struck him and was dismissed. He resumed teaching, and continues to be a teacher to this day.

[boxed item]

'Amos Gilboa' and Ya'aqov Simonov: We Have No Connection to the Matter

'Amos Gilboa', who used to be the prime minister's advisor on Arab affairs, denied that he or other members of the Likud had knowledge of this process. He stated that it is inconceivable and illegal for the Likud to purchase votes. He added: "I will answer all questions after reading the book."

Ya'aqov Simonov, who used to head the elections department in the Negev, expressed amazement with al-Talaliqah's book, especially inasmuch as al-Talaliqah is a Likud Party activist.

He added: "This is incorrect. There was no effort to buy votes. I did not agree to [pay] a sum in exchange for votes, and I do not know how al-Talaliqah paid this sum."

Simonov denied knowledge of the deal with the Islamic movement alleged by al-Talaliqah. He stressed that he would have canceled such a deal immediately upon finding out about it.

As to whether al-Talaliqah broke the law, Simonov stated: "If he did, he must bear the consequences."

Simonov acknowledged that he and 'Amos Gilboa' had visited Rahat. They emphasized there that they would give aid to mosques, including the al-'Ikha' mosque, without any connection to elections.

'Judaization' of Triangle, 'Seven Stars Plan'

92AE0259B Nazareth AL-SINNARAH in Arabic
28 Feb 92 p 13

[Text] "This settlement plan targets the remaining land in the Arab triangle. It aims to erase the green line by entrenching settlements on the ground as a fait accompli by attracting hundreds of thousands of new Jewish immigrants to the hills of the triangle and settling them there at the expense of the Arab residents, who now constitute the overwhelming majority of residents in the area."

The preceding is contained in the introduction to the book "Seven Stars—A New Settlement Plan To Judaize the Arab Triangle and Erase the Green Line," published by the editorial staff of Dar al-Shararah Publishing House. The book reviews the "seven stars" plan formulated by the Housing Ministry and Housing Minister 'Ariel Sharon. The plan is designed to house new immigrants in settlements interposed between Arab villages in the Wadi 'Arah area, thus create a Jewish majority in the area.

The book was presented in a press conference held in Jerusalem in the coming week [as published]. The following is a summary of it:

The "seven stars" plan undertaken by the Housing Ministry aims to facilitate the absorption of Jewish immigrants who have arrived in the country since 1990. It centers on a narrow, 80-km long sector lying on both sides of the green line that separates the West Bank from the eastern edge of the coastal plain. This sector extends between the Modi'in area south and the heights of the city of Umm-al-Fahm in the north. The population of the area includes 130,000 Arab citizens and 40,000 Jewish citizens.

The new settlement plan deals with the triangle area, which includes 17 large villages and several small Arab villages. These villages have been considered Arab in terms of geographical continuity and demographic composition since 1949. This reality has not been changed by the occupation of the West Bank, despite the national, cultural, and even kinship connection between the triangle's villages and those of the West Bank—from Qalqilyah in the south to Janin in the north.

The basic idea of the Housing Ministry's plan is to create a line of settlements parallel to the coastal plain to ease population pressure in the central area of the country between Ashdod in the south and Hadera in the north. The plan centers on the construction of a number of cities and high-tech industrial zones adjacent to them for the absorption of new settlers. The plan also includes the construction of a road linking the municipality of Shlomi in the north to Beersheba in the south. This road has been designated Road No. 6.

The plan was approved officially on 2 December 1990, i.e., six months after Sharon became housing minister. The final date for the implementation of the plan is

2005, when the population of the state of Israel will approach 8 million. At that time, it is envisaged that the said area will have to be populated by 555,500 citizens, including 393,400 Jewish citizens and 162,100 Arab citizens, compared to 40,000 Jews and more than 100,000 Arabs at present.

Currently, Arabs and Jews constitute 71.5 percent and 28.5 percent, respectively, of the triangle's residents. However, this situation will be reversed within three years, according to the plan, so that Arab residents will make up only 34 percent of the triangle's population, whereas Jewish residents will comprise 64 percent.

The plan stipulates that Road No. 6 will be 120 meters wide and accessible only by means of bridges and entrance ramps. Its construction will require the extensive expropriation of lands belonging to a number of Arab villages. However, the greatest danger for in the Arab sector centers on the fact that the new road, which will connect existing and planned Jewish settlements in the area, will cut between neighboring Arab villages; i.e., it will become a barrier between neighboring Arab villages. It will also separate villages from land belonging to them on the other side of the road.

It an interview conducted by YEDI'OT AHARONOT with the general director of the Public Works Department, it was said that the road alone will cost \$500 million, excluding the costs of the bridges and entrance ramps needed to enable the Arab villages to use the road. This means that the cost will be many times greater. Two points can be discerned in statements made by officials: 1) The state will not invest funds to build the dozens of entrance ramps and bridges needed to serve Arab residents; and 2) the state does not lack funds, and it is able to allocate sums to solve the problems of the local Arab councils.

The second focus of the plan is the expansion of existing cities, such as Rosh Ha'ayin. According to the plan, Rosh Ha'ayin's current population of 11,700 will be increased to 50,000. Rosh Ha'ayin will thus constitute a barrier and an obstacle to the development of the villages of Kafr Qasim, Jaljulyah, and Kafr [Barra], because the expansion of Rosh Ha'ayin will be at the expense of these villages and their land, which will be expropriated if Rosh Ha'ayin is expanded westward and northward, rather than eastward and southward. Also, Road No. 6 will swallow half of the land of the village of Jaljulyah.

All of this is in addition to the lands that have been expropriated from these three villages (50 percent of the land of Kafr Qasim has been expropriated and placed at the disposal of Kibbutz Giv'at Hashlosha).

By itself, the small village of Kafr Barra will not be able to confront the plans to expand the settlements of Rosh Ha'ayin, Nirit, Yarith, and others.

Elimination of the Green Line

In addition to separating Arab population centers from each other, the plan aims to build dense settlements and an extensive network of roads. It aims to create a situation in which it will subsequently be impossible to determine the lines separating Israel and a Palestinian state, because every attempt to do so could lead to the collapse of the Israeli economic and civilian base and the incurring of enormous damage by hundreds of thousands of residents living in this area. Israel will exploit this issue as another political justification for its absolute refusal to withdraw and to divide the country.

It remains only to say that no Arab representative participated in the formulation of this plan, even though the plan concerns an area where most of the residents are Arab. This is no coincidence if we realize that the plan is not intended to benefit Arab residents. Rather, it targets them and is intended to harm them and eliminate the Arab majority. Also, the new industrial zones are intended to serve the Jewish residents and to exploit the Arab residents, so that their villages turn into mere places to sleep.

The following is a detailed table of the increase in population in several Jewish cities and settlements envisaged by the plan (partial table):

Name of Place	1988	1995	2005
Rosh Ha'ayin	11,700	28,000	50,000
Kokhav Ya'ir	2,570	4,700	11,200
Yad Hanna	—	2,300	3,000
Arab Villages	101,202	124,500	162,100
Jewish Settlements	40,255	217,700	393,400
Cooperatives [kibbutzim]	25,985	39,100	46,700

West Bank, Gaza Health, Environmental Problems

92WN0349Z Nicosia FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH
in Arabic 1 Mar 92 pp 10-11

[Text] Before the Palestinian delegation [to the peace talks] left for Washington last week, the occupation authorities summoned Dr. Ahmad al-Yaziji, detained him for some time, and questioned him about the lecture he delivered at the UN seminar held in Nicosia 20-24 January. The following is text of the lecture:

As is known to everybody, the Gaza Strip is that narrow coastal strip that is no more than 45 km long, 6-8 km wide, and has a total area of 360 square km.

More than 750,000 people live in this small area of land. The Gaza Strip does not have an accurate population census, due to deliberate action by the occupation authorities.

Population density in the Gaza Strip is the highest in the world, with 1,800 persons per square kilometer. This would be much higher if we take into consideration the fact that 30 percent of the Gaza Strip's area is taken up by settlements, whose known total is 16; and areas occupied for security purposes. With the high population growth, which is about 4 percent, the Gaza Strip's inhabitants will reach more than 1 million during the coming decade, which would further aggravate the population problem, with the rate of settlement building continuing as it is now.

Demographic problems, coupled with poor economic conditions and unemployment, have led to a serious health situation and to innumerable health problems. The number of visitors to clinics is more than 8,000 patients a day, for whom no acceptable minimum health services are available, due to the large crowds to be attended to by doctors, in addition to shortage in diagnostic capabilities, medicines, etc.

This introduction is necessary in order to perceive the extent of the health problems from which citizens in the Gaza Strip are suffering.

Any place in the world with such a high population density, psychological pressures, economic situation, and lack of environmental services because of indifference and neglect of the health situation by the authorities, can only lead to an extremely grave health situation.

The following are examples:

Water

The acute water shortage in several areas of the Gaza Strip and the increase in salinity and organic and chemical deposits has rendered many wells unsuitable for human consumption. Yet the inhabitants continue to use such water because of refusal to allow drilling of alternative wells. This is a means of pressure by the Israeli occupier aimed at forcing the inhabitants to use the water supplied by the Israeli company "Meqarot", which exploits the underground water of the Gaza Strip itself in order to obtain this water. Often this water is diverted from the Gaza Strip to the interior of Israel, which further exacerbates the water problem.

Sewage

Sewage disposal is the biggest problem of all. The present situation is indescribably bad. It is inconceivable and unacceptable, as we are on the threshold of the 21st century, that sewage disposal could be in the state described below:

1. Some 90 percent of the Gaza Strip's residential areas lack public sewage systems. Even those areas that have old and eroded sewage systems [sometimes] explode, causing the sewage to spill everywhere. The system's junction points and basins are very close, indeed in the midst of, residential areas. Sewage reservoirs are not

treated with modern methods, thus becoming a source of health risks, insect breeding, and contamination of subterranean waters.

2. Areas outside the refugee camps depend on absorption wells for sewage disposal. The soil around these wells has become saturated and therefore useless, thus causing the sewage to overflow onto the streets and making the residential areas look as if they are swimming in pools of sewage.

3. The problem outside the camps is even more widespread and more serious, since sewage water is disposed of through open gutters that terminate at the sea shore. Children swim and play close to the mouths of these drainage terminals, which poses a serious health hazard for them. The occupation authorities and the municipalities, whose budgets are controlled by the internal affairs directorate under the occupation authorities, do nothing to resolve these problems.

Refuse

Refuse is not collected on regular basis and is left to accumulate in residential areas, around houses, and in squares, thus creating endless health problems.

Environmental Pollution

The poor economic situation and the inhabitants' desire to earn a living and to progress and develop has led to the introduction of several primitive industries that generate pollutants. For this reason, these industries have been banned in Israel and were brought to the occupied territories, especially into the Gaza Strip. These primitive workshops have been established in the midst of residential areas, because of the nonexistence of industrial zones outside the towns and villages. It is also because such areas are occupied by settlements and by military zones that are off-limits. The same thing can also be said about bringing in old vehicles that pollute the air, and the pollution is aided by the lack of trees. This is also due to the expansion of the urban areas at the expense of agricultural lands for the reasons just mentioned, namely the high population density and the seizure of land by the occupation authorities.

Now after this review of environmental problems, we move to health problems in general. The Gaza Strip suffers from many contemporary diseases, such as blood pressure, diabetes, and blood diseases because of psychological and social pressures. It also suffers from contagious diseases.

It is true that pursuing the policy of immunization recommended by WHO has led to reducing some diseases, such as polio and measles, but on the other hand, various diarrheal diseases, bronchitis, tetanus, and various skin diseases still exist widely. This is in addition to various types of parasitic diseases. Research has shown that about 80 percent of the children are infected by one or more types of worm diseases. Research on gum and teeth problems has underlined the seriousness of the

situation, since not a single schoolchild among those tested was free of gum and dental diseases.

The rate of anemia among pre-school children has reached 70 percent, and among pregnant women more than 60 percent. Malnutrition of various degrees is spreading among children under five years old, reaching about 50 percent. Asthma cases are increasing in number and in gravity due to the Israeli army's excessive use of tear gas in residential areas, and often inside closed houses.

What type of medical services are being provided to the inhabitants? Government medical services, the UNRWA [UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees], and private medicine.

We will concentrate on government health services since, in actual fact, they are responsible for the citizens' health in the occupied territories and they are fully responsible for that. Health services are divided into the Hospitals Branch and the Public Health Branch.

Government Hospitals

Hospital Name	Number of Beds	Number of Doctors	Nursing Staff
Dar al-Shifa'	450	137	280
Nasir	213	67	135
al-Nasr Children's Hospital	135	39	56
al-'Uyun Hospital	35	8	13
Psychiatric	37	4	15
Total	870	255	499

A first glance at this statistic would show that there is one bed for every 862 people, one doctor for every 3,000 people, and one nurse for every 1,500 people. But if, for example, we take the number children's beds (135) and know that 50 percent of the population is under 15 years old, then it would show that there is one bed for every 3,000 persons, one doctor for every 1,000 persons, and about one nurse for every 7,000 persons.

With regard to work efficiency, we would make the following observations: Care inside hospitals is unsatisfactory, since the occupation authorities are not interested in the existence of real care as much as they are interested in pretending that there is care. Half of the jobs have been cut and budgets are very limited. None of the Arab staff know the real amount of the budget or has anything to do with its distribution. Therefore, many patients are forced to buy medicines from outside at their own expense. Medical insurance is exhausting for a public that does not have the material means of continuing it. Medical insurance is based on age and not real income. A family needs more than one medical insurance [policy], which is beyond its means.

The Gaza Strip's hospitals lack many vital specializations and modern diagnostic methods, which requires them to constantly send patients to Israel, at the expense of the health budget in Gaza. The budget is subject to cuts and auditing. The Israeli official's approval is required in every case, and non-medical considerations often interfere with the process of financing a patient. Hospital equipment is purchased by the occupation authorities and with their knowledge, without real participation by the Palestinian officials, which would make the selection and priorities unsuitable. There is an acute shortage of beds in many sections. The rate of children's

bed occupancy, for example, is more than one patient per bed, while in specialized sections such as plastic surgery, urinary diseases, children [as published], and others, there are no more than two or three beds.

Building and equipment maintenance is not available, due to financial and bureaucratic reasons, thereby exposing them to damage. This is due to the authorities' orders to cut expenditures. Repeated army attacks against hospitals and medical units and the arrest of patients have caused the public to lose confidence in the integrity of medical services and force them to resort to other facilities that may not be as efficient.

The occupation authorities have sowed the seeds of dissension among the medical staff and the auxiliary nursing and administrative services, thus dividing the leadership. There is no prudent central leadership to manage the affairs according to work needs. Nursing goes in one direction and doctors go in another. Coordination between the various groups is nonexistent because of deliberate action by the occupation's health authority.

[Boxed item]

UNRWA Bulletin No. 247 of 18 January 1992 spoke about Gaza inhabitants' favorable reaction to the EC decision to contribute to the new Gaza hospital that UNRWA will build.

The bulletin quoted a statement by eight major institutions in Gaza, the text of which follows:

"The national and humanitarian institutions in the Gaza Strip have officially learned that the EC has donated

\$16.7 million as a contribution to build a hospital in Gaza under UNRWA administration.

"This contribution will serve all the Gaza Strip's inhabitants. We wish here to express our deep thanks and appreciation to the EC, and hope that positive participation in helping the sons of the Gaza Strip in the fields of social and economic development services will continue. We also hope that UNRWA will begin to implement this vital and important project as soon as possible."

Signatories: The Middle East Council of Churches (Refugee Relief), Palestinian Women's Union, the Central Blood Bank, the Red Crescent Association in Gaza Strip, the Arab Medical Association, the Palestinian Chamber of Commerce, the Engineers' Association in Gaza, and the Young Men's Christian Association in Gaza.]

Public Health

The second part of government health services is that which is responsible for outpatient care and a healthy environment.

There are 27 public clinics that are located in various parts of the Gaza Strip. They are staffed by 68 physicians, eight dentists, and 165 nurses. This is at the rate of 10,000 citizens for every physician and about 5,000 for every nurse. This is half the amount of health services provided for Palestinians inside Israel, in Galilee for example. This is not to compare them with services available to the Jewish population.

Because of severe crowding, a patient does not receive adequate care, since a doctor examines no less than 100 patients daily. These clinics lack diagnostic resources, such as laboratories and equipment. Most of these clinics are clinics only in name, because they consist only of a very limited number of rooms, and the buildings need to be pulled down and rebuilt, not just repaired. Both the public and the workers suffer because of the poor conditions in summer. Many primary care programs are nonexistent. Some examples:

- No school health care, except for some immunization at the beginning of every year;
- No programs or teams for health education or social care;
- No programs for caring for the old and chronically ill people; Medicines for chronic illnesses are subject to unfair health insurance, not to mention sporadic availability of medicines.
- No programs for psychological health or programs concerned with development and growth, and there is no follow-up home care for sick children and elderly people;
- No programs for rehabilitation and nutrition;
- Programs for environmental health are almost nonexistent;
- The unavailability of laboratories for food inspection and no control over food products; The number of health inspectors and workers in this branch is very limited. There are no auxiliary means of transport and equipment for pollution detection.

EGYPT

Clerics Call For Support of Muslim Republics

[92AF0515B Cairo AL-HAQIAH in Arabic 9 Feb 92
p 12

[Column by 'Abd-al-Fattah al-Shurbaji: "It Is Our Duty To Stand by Soviet Islamic Republics"]

[Text] The Egyptian Ministry of Awqaf [religious endowments] has adopted sound practices in recent years, such as designating the Isra' and Mi'raj [the Prophet's Nocturnal Journey and his Journey By Night to the Seven Heavens] celebration as Muslim Callers Day [preachers of the Muslim call, yawm al-da'ah]. A number of clerics from all over the world are invited to this celebration and honored by the ministry. Twenty-two guests of honor from 15 nations have been honored, including five from the Islamic republics in Russia. The response of the guests of honor was delivered by His Eminence Shaykh Muhammad Yusif Muhammad Sadiq, Mufti of Central Asia of the Islamic Republics in Russia and head of the Religious Department.

His eminence, who hails from the homeland of Imams al-Bukhari and al-Turmazi, emphasized that our Muslim colleagues in those republics praise God and prostrate themselves to Him in thanks for having used a great earthquake to remove the camp of apostasy in their land and bring an end to the age of humiliation and degradation of human dignity. He emphasized that the time has come to end the estrangement of those republics and to restore them to the motherland embrace of the greater Islamic world. They were once unable to practice their rituals or preach their faith in the former Soviet Union [which was] the bulwark of atheism and impiety.

We [at AL-HAQIAH] therefore say to Muslims in Egypt, and in the Arab and Islamic worlds, that this testimony came from one of the Soviet Union's populations, whose religion used to be atheism and whose belief used to be impiety. Perhaps the testimony of this esteemed shaykh will now induce our brethren in this world to now believe what they previously refused to believe.

His Eminence Shaykh Muhammad Yusif Sadiq asserted that Muslims in the Islamic Republics in Russia reject Shi'ism and do not wish to be Shi'ites. Rather, their minds and their intellectual and cultural concerns turn towards Muslim Egypt and the venerable al-Azhar; to Egypt, the land of thousands of minarets—to breathe in orthodox Islamic teachings that are pure and devoid of extremism.

His Eminence the Mufti of Central Asia in the Islamic Republics in Russia emphasized three concepts—that they reject atheism and impiety, that they reject Shi'ism,

and that they reject extremism. These notions enunciated in his remarks place on Egypt—the Egypt of the venerable al-Azhar, the Egypt of the Ministry of Awqaf [religious endowments, and Egypt that has begun to assemble [Islamic] clerics into a cohesive working team—a new great burden that calls for expeditiously dispatching the greatest scholars and the most esteemed clerics to those republics in order to enlighten their Muslims about their religion and to spread sound Islamic concepts among the Muslims of those republics before they are misled in the name of religion by the fallacious [emissaries] from another country.

Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, minister of Awqaf, has emphasized a return to the concept of collective mosques in order to benefit Muslims in all of life's endeavors. We beseech Dr. Mahjub, especially since the call of Islam has been unified under the banner of al-Azhar—we beseech him to expeditiously prepare a timetable, to be implemented sooner than later, to spread the call of Islam in those republics that have been long deprived of Islamic tidings and whose Muslims are longing for the warm embrace of Muslim Egypt.

I pray to God to look after all those who preach His true religion and to guide the religious leaders, be they at al-Azhar, at its university, or at the Ministry of Awqaf, in order that we may take the initiative before it is taken by others. May God guide their path. Thanks to God, the Lord of the two worlds, who relieved us and them from the misery of the camp of atheism and impiety.

NDI Weekly Criticizes Socialist Labor Leaders

J92AF0515A Cairo MAYU in Arabic 17 Feb 92 p 6

[Investigative Report by Muhammad Najib 'Ali: "Labor Party, Khomeini Style!"]

[Text] In the totally muddled style of Khomeini, some people at the former Socialist Labor Party are planning for 'Adil Husayn to take over as party chairman and for Ibrahim Shukri to turn into a spiritual leader!

The issue is not rooted in ideology or the outcome of experience. It is primarily an expression of 'Adil Husayn's latent desire to ride the wave and recapture the party that he considers to be the Husayn family's rightful inheritance from Ibrahim Shukri!

This is the full story of behind-the-scenes maneuvers in the files of the unprincipled party, as told by leaders who rejected and opposed that line of thinking!

What happened to principles? Dr. Hamdi 'Atallah, chairman of the Arab Relations and Foreign Affairs Committee and member of the Supreme Committee of the Labor Party—Socialist Front, says that the problem is that 'Adil Husayn is never pledged to a principle. "His personal interests come first. He used to embrace Communist ideology and was arrested. After his release, he went to Lebanon, where he worked in journalism and for a while adopted the Nasirist ideology. Then he returned

from Lebanon in the belief that the stage was set for extremism and that such ideologies merely needed someone to lead. He therefore decided, using a transparent, antiquated style, to advocate the concept of an Islamic society such as exists in Iran. The best proof of that is what he printed in AL-SHA'B newspaper to propagate the Khomeini ideology and the system of government in Iran. We have repeatedly and frequently warned against that."

'Atallah adds that 'Adil Husayn meets frequently and on every occasion with Iran's imams and clerics. With Ibrahim Shukri right behind him, he attends Ayatollah conferences in Amman, Baghdad, and Khartoum, which proves that this throng is outside the populist mainstream.

Muzzling Shukri!

He emphasizes that 'Adil Husayn and his group have set out to rein in Ibrahim Shukri, tighten their control, and get Shukri out of the picture. They deceived him previously, at the time of his so-called coalition with the Muslim Brotherhood, when they claimed that the overwhelming majority of the Egyptian population would rush to fall in step behind him. But fortune decreed otherwise and the Brotherhood itself began to abandon him.

Hamdi Ahmad, once a member of the Supreme and Executive Committees of the Socialist Labor Party and its Secretary General for Cairo, says that he had previously warned Ibrahim Shukri that this route was fraught with danger, but Shukri did not listen. At any rate, if he can no longer sustain his struggle, which would be no disgrace, since age has its dictates, then he should call in the General Assembly to freely elect a new party chairman. This sort of action, in case he is not aware, would have a place in the annals of political history.

The [party] newspaper has called him the "Great Activist;" but he would be dubbed the "Supreme Activist" by the General Assembly if Shukri convened it to democratically and honorably select a chairman, proving that he respects the populist precepts for which he claims he is fighting day and night, thereby proving that his advocacy is action and not mere rhetoric!

Rejection

Hamdi Ahmad asserted his rejection of the principle course adopted by 'Adil Husayn and his band in order to turn the [party] into an estate—an inheritance that they can handle in any manner they wish.

He said "We reject [the concept of a] hereditary leadership or a bequeathed succession. This is unacceptable. Parties must be led by those with truly vested interests in them and not for the benefit of a few dozen individuals who presently dominate."

Hamdi Ahmad beseeched that group to "become good role models and to follow God's tenets in dealing with Egypt and its youth, if they truly wished them well."

"[Their] actions are farthest from democracy and sound partisan practices and greatly harm democratic life in Egypt."

Hamdi Ahmad wondered where 'Adil Husayn—who is now attempting to take control of the Labor Party—was in the early days of that party. He was a Communist vanguard in the left before he took off the red garb to don the black robe [abaya]. And now he wants to install himself as Imam!

The Days Pass

Faraj 'Atiyyah, Secretary General for Cairo and member of the Supreme Committee of the Labor Party—Socialist Front points out that the call espoused by 'Adil Husayn, his nephew Majdi Ahmad, and his uncle Hilmi Murad, will force Ibrahim Shukri to taste the same medicine he gave former party leaders. Shukri, since the inception of the party, has been in the habit of discarding his lieutenants. Examples abound, such as the late Rifat al-Shihawi, the party's Secretary General when it was founded; the late Fu'ad Nushi, who enjoys pure Islamic socialism; the late Ahmad Farghali 'Ali; Ibrahim Yunis, etc. It seems that 'Adil Husayn and his followers understood the game and wanted to lunch on Ibrahim Shukri before he dines on them!

'Atiyyah adds: "That clique has now managed to turn Ibrahim Shukri into a Labor Party figurehead."

Faraj 'Atiyyah beseeched that group, which considers the Labor Party a personal inheritance, to heed the lessons of Algeria, Sudan, and Iran, and to abandon this game of personal gain.

"I recall once when we were discussing participation in local elections, that Shukri could not arrive at a decision before consulting with the Muslim Brotherhood, which advised against it."

Socialist Labor Party member Ahmad Abu-Dayf asserted that 'Adil Husayn and his clique consider the party a legacy of the former Misr-al-Fatah [party] and that there is nothing in the party for Ibrahim Shukri. They [consider it] sufficient to nominate him as Honorary Chairman for the rest of his days, especially since he has lost his popularity and presence after his shameful stand on the Gulf war, and also because of his positions on domestic issues.

He explained that the party's organ is no longer the mouthpiece of the party and its ideology, but unfailingly

speaks for such foreign powers as Iraq and Iran, and even for the investment companies that swindled everybody!

Identity Divestiture

He asserted that they began implementing that strategy five years ago by removing party stalwarts, altering its precepts and values, and abandoning the purpose for which it was founded. Ibrahim Shukri was lost to anonymity because he leased the party—lock, stock and barrel—to the Muslim Brotherhood and completely divested it of its identity.

Muhammad al-Sayyid Turki, Secretary General for Youth of the Labor Party—Socialist Front in al-Minufiyyah, said that Ibrahim Shukri's problem is that he sold the party and the principles for which it stood. The party organ now defends Khomeini, al-Turabi, and their ilk. It is no wonder that 'Adil Husayn would attempt to install himself as chairman of the party whose name changed from "Socialist Labor" to "Islamic Labor!" The party is devoid of its essence and Ibrahim Shukri has been rendered powerless.

Fathi 'Abd-al-'Aziz Turk, al-Minufiyyah Secretary General of the Labor Party—Socialist Front says "We have warned, since the inception of the reform movement three years ago, that Ibrahim is only a front and that Husayn's family has set out to control him. They had an opportunity to do so when he was abandoned by all his colleagues."

He adds that "Shukri no longer has a following in the governorates. He would be totally powerless to organize a populist caucus in al-Minufiyyah, which he has not visited in the three years since the reform movement began."

IRAQ

Barzani Vows Revenge for Baghdad Blockade

[92AE0267A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Feb 92 pp 1, 4

[Article by Kamran (Qurah) Daghi: "Barzani: We Demand Permanent International Safeguards; Blockading Kurds Could Be Explosive"]

[Text] The leader of the Kurdish Democratic Party [KDP] and co-chairman of the [Iraqi] Kurdistan Front emphasized that Kurds need international safeguards that are permanent, not merely temporary for a few months. He said that his talks with high-level officials in London indicated to him that Britain was the Kurds' strongest supporter and that its stand is significant and more advanced than that of other countries.

He warned that economic deterioration in Iraqi Kurdistan and the continuation of the blockade imposed by Baghdad since 23 October could lead to a "societal explosion." He added that the population has indeed

demonstrated for food more than once in front of the offices of UN agencies in several Kurdish towns.

He pointed out that the world community, in the days of the League of Nations, had made commitment to agree to recognition of Kurdish national rights a condition of admitting the State of Iraq to the League in 1932. He believes that the problem is rooted in Baghdad's continued violation of that pledge.

Barzani arrived in London from Ankara on an official visit at the invitation of Prime Minister John Major. The visit is part of a multi-nation European tour that might take him to the United States.

He was informed of efforts to form a delegation which would include Iraqi opposition [leaders] and which would go to the U.S. under his leadership. However, Barzani told AL-HAYAH that he has yet to make a decision on either the visit or the composition of the delegation. He added that he does not object to the idea in principle, but that more scrutiny is called for, "particularly to ascertain the level of proposed delegation members."

Barzani held a press conference at the parliament building yesterday which was also attended by such British notables as Emma Nicholson, a deputy known for her defense of human rights in Iraq, and especially of the Kurds and Shi'ites; Geoffrey Archer, former vice chairman of the ruling Conservative party; and Julian Emory, minister of state for foreign affairs in the government of the late prime minister Anthony Eden. The Kurdish leader also met yesterday with former prime minister Margaret Thatcher and met the day before with Princess Anne, daughter of Queen Elizabeth II.

He compared his current visit and the reception he was accorded with a visit to London in 1989 to implore the world to stop the Kurdish genocide. He mused: "At that time, I was received only by a fourth-tier official of the Foreign Office, and then only after he stipulated that we meet at a restaurant!"

He called for international help in changing emergency relief into a development program for Iraqi Kurdistan in order to "turn the Kurds into a productive people instead of consumers dependent on others." He explained that 80 percent of Kurds were engaged in agriculture and dependent on it, but that the Iraqi regime has worked over the years to undermine Kurdish infrastructure by destroying 4,500 of 5,000 villages and by exterminating hundreds of thousands of inhabitants.

He reiterated Kurdish demands for self-rule within a democratic Iraq, saying that experience has proven that the Kurdish national issue can not be resolved through violence and that democracy is "the only permanent cure for this and other problems in Iraq."

The Opposition

At his press conference and lecture he gave early yesterday at the Royal Institute for International Affairs, Barzani elucidated on the situation in Kurdistan and on the Kurdish position on proposals to unify the Iraqi opposition and bring down President Saddam's regime. He said that mainstream Kurdish opposition is represented only by the Kurdistan Front, composed of eight major parties, including one that represents Assyrians. He regretted the existence of 72 parties and opposition movements, some of which "use the opposition slogan as a money-making ploy."

He pointed out that, at the time of the Iraqi "intifadah" last March, the Kurdistan Front invited all major opposition forces, including the Shi'ites, to come from abroad to Kurdistan and organize an "Iraqi base in which the Kurds would participate; but they never came." He said that the situation was on the verge of collapse in Mosul, and that the "Kurds could have seized it by themselves, but we refrained, lest the cause take on the appearance of Arab-Kurdish conflict. Things would have been different, had the move been led by the Arab opposition."

In that regard, he beseeched all regional forces to avoid fractionalizing the opposition by abstaining from attempts to create loyalties within it. He called upon the opposition forces to reject being "an extension" of any foreign power. He emphasized that the Kurdistan Front, "and all its components, including the KDP and the Kurdistan National Union" are ready for serious participation in any serious opposition initiative that "recognizes specific Kurdish rights and commits to establishing a democratic system in Iraq that is based neither on sectarianism nor on fundamentalism."

The Military Situation

In answer to a question on the military situation in Kurdistan, Barzani explained that the Iraqi Government has redeployed its forces along some 500 kilometers of defensive lines. They are "attack forces supported by tanks in certain areas, but are generally defensive. Minor altercations take place here and there and that helicopters sometimes cross the 36th parallel demarcation line, which they are forbidden to cross" but that it was unlikely that Iraqi forces would launch a full offensive. He said, in answer to another question, that he can't see how Baghdad would be able to foil the Kurdish elections scheduled for next April, "unless they launch a military attack against us, which is unlikely because of external factors and the regime's domestic situation."

He emphasized that the Kurds are able to take retaliation measures for the Baghdad-imposed economic blockade, and pointed out that the Kurds have total control over the two main dams that supply large areas of Iraq with hydro-electric power, "but we don't want to use that weapon."

University Professor Says Regime in 'Shock'

92AE0255A Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 31 Jan 92 p 8

[Interview with Dr. Wamid Nazmi, professor of political science at Baghdad University, by Muna Sukkariyah, place and date not given: "Baghdad University Professor Relates Iraq's Anguish; Wamid Nazmi: 'Difficulties May Lead to Disasters'"]

[Text] When things are at their absolute worst, a bit of criticism may be in order. So as not to blame freedom unjustly by using the term where it does not belong, perhaps, [let us just say] that Iraq's tragedy has grown, resulting in a marginal amount of criticism described by Dr. Wamid Nazmi, a professor of political science at Baghdad University, as "within narrow limits." He says there are two reasons behind it: the shock to the regime's image caused by Iraq's setback, and the failure to answer questions about what happened.

Apart from stressing the tragic social reality, especially in the area of health, Dr. Nazmi talks of Iraq's political suffering as manifested in the weakness of internal forces and the inability of opposition forces abroad to bring about change, "putting Iraq in deep anguish." As Nazmi told us before and during the interview conducted by AL-SAFIR, this is "causing frustration, especially among young people."

[Sukkariyah] As a professor at the university, how were you able to leave Baghdad?

[Nazmi] Travel is not banned now.

[Sukkariyah] What we know about the Baghdad regime does not accord with such liberty.

[Nazmi] There has been some relaxation in this area. There are restrictions on some types of travel, such as banning women who do not have a protector to accompany them. I came to take part in the seminar organized by the Center for Arab Unity Studies, a center that is respected academically.

[Sukkariyah] Will you return to Baghdad?

[Nazmi] Of course, via Amman.

[Sukkariyah] Will you be taken in for questioning and investigation?

[Nazmi] I do not think so.

[Sukkariyah] Why not?

[Nazmi] First of all, this was an academic conference. I have previously attended numerous seminars and have not been subjected to harm.

[Sukkariyah] After the war?

[Nazmi] Yes, I took part in the Second Arab Nationalist Conference in Amman and in a seminar in Cairo organized by the Arab Thought Forum based in Amman.

[Sukkariyah] Do any others like you travel?

[Nazmi] There are a few cases.

[Sukkariyah] Does this mean that Iraqis are now enjoying some liberty?

[Nazmi] I believe there is a margin of liberty, even for criticism, although within narrow limits. This situation is a result of two factors: the first is the shock to the regime's image—and to a great extent to its legitimacy—following the setback to which Iraq was subjected. It has still not been able to answer numerous questions related, for example, to why it did not withdraw before 15 January 1991, but then accepted withdrawal later on, or the question of the ground war, which failed to last as long as had been assumed.

[Sukkariyah] Is the reason for invading Kuwait not a question?

[Nazmi] Of course, [this], as well as the starvation Iraqis are facing, and the tremendous devastation inflicted on the country, have stimulated people to speak out in a manner unprecedented in modern Iraqi history.

Secondly, the regime promised pluralism and promulgated a parties' law. Despite some observations on it, it does establish the right of Iraqis to a multiplicity of political allegiances. As a result, a citizen can disagree with the ruling party to a certain extent. Moreover, the Ba'th leadership's having entered a dialogue with Kurdish leaders who, in the past, were considered opponents and enemies offers justification to other non-Kurds to take part in the ongoing dialogue concerning the future of Iraq with greater freedom than in the past.

[Sukkariyah] Are the jailings continuing?

[Nazmi] There have been some releases of detainees and prisoners, especially Kurds, and, I believe, among the ranks of Shi'ite religious fundamentalist parties.

[Sukkariyah] Is this in order to absorb internal resentment?

[Nazmi] That may be one of the reasons. There also appears to be pressure from within the regime to improve its image abroad.

[Sukkariyah] What is preventing the downfall of Saddam Husayn?

[Nazmi] First of all, that shall be decided by the Iraqi people alone. The demand for the overthrow of Saddam Husayn by the United States of America and certain other Arab regimes has no legal basis or justification. Are the regimes of the Arabian Peninsula or the Gulf any more democratic or constitutional than Saddam Husayn's, so that they could push those demands? Do the Americans want to rule Iraq from their embassy in Baghdad?

[Sukkariyah] How would you describe current living conditions in Baghdad?

[Nazmi] In the services area, Iraqi technicians have accomplished what, without exaggeration, can be called a miracle. They restored electricity, got telephones working, built bridges, and secured fuel. But there are tremendous everyday hardships and medical difficulties because of the economic blockade imposed on Iraq. The state is trying to distribute some foodstuffs at reduced prices, but the quantities are small, and they are distributed sporadically. Other items, not related to foodstuffs, are available through the private sector, but at outrageous prices. Inflation ranges from 1000 to 5000 percent, making life extremely difficult. Meanwhile, medicine is not available, even simple medicines for children. I estimate that by now about 85,000 children have died since the blockade began.

[Sukkariyah] Are all parts of Iraq alike in terms of social and everyday crises, or are there disparities?

[Nazmi] I believe that the situation in Baghdad, as harsh as it is, is better than conditions in southern Iraq or in the north. We as a family, for example, still boil water before drinking it because we are not sure it has been sterilized. But in the south, the drinking water is definitely polluted. The West has even cut off chlorine for purifying water. Likewise, the dispute now taking place between the government and Kurdish leaders has made it difficult for foodstuffs to reach the north. Hence, conditions in the north and in the south seem worse to me than they are in Baghdad.

[Sukkariyah] What is preventing a popular uprising, if only to get answers to the questions you mentioned?

[Nazmi] The truth is, there are no active political organizations in Baghdad that could answer these questions. But I believe that insistence by the West and certain Arab countries on the overthrow of President Saddam Husayn is considered by the Iraqi people, or some segments, to be interference in their internal affairs. This strengthens the regime more than it weakens it. Moreover, the incidents in the north and south took on a factional and ethnic character, not an Iraqi one. Incidents in the north were led by Kurdish nationalist parties and movements, while in the south, the movement had a more Shi'ite than Iraqi character. A great deal of bloody violence infused these incidents, represented in the killing of no less than 2,500 people from the various sects without fair trials, and in some instances, women and children were put to death by the opposition.

[Sukkariyah] Perhaps it was in revenge for the grief to which they were subjected.

[Nazmi] This led to a backlash among the other segments of the population who were not comfortable with the ethnic and sectarian nature of the opposition, nor with the bloody methods that permeated the events.

There is no doubt but that the regime has been guilty of mistakes in the past, especially in driving the Kurds out of their villages and subjecting them to suppression. The same is true in southern Iraq, where they drove out those

they called the subordinates, i.e., Iraqis of Iranian origin. This was interpreted as being directed against the Shi'ites in particular, but these mistakes must not lead to the partition of Iraq or the outbreak of bloody counter-terrorism. This is what led to the faltering of activities that erupted in the north and south, and their failure militarily, because I believe that most of the Iraqi people believe in the need for Iraq's unity and the flowering of a democratic climate for everyone.

[Sukkariyah] Does this mean the opposition forces abroad will be unable to do anything?

[Nazmi] There are various types of opposition forces abroad. One segment has no presence whatsoever within Iraq. Another segment calls openly for an American occupation of Baghdad and the overthrow of Saddam Husayn. This situation calls for revulsion, more than discussion.

[Sukkariyah] Where is Iraq now headed?

[Nazmi] Iraq is undoubtedly facing great hardships and tremendous anguish. These might be factors for progress, instillation of national unity, and establishment of a new Iraq. But the situation in Iraq could also worsen and confront new disasters. The process relates to issues of willpower and the struggle over awareness of the current Iraqi problem.

[Sukkariyah] What about emigration out of Iraq?

[Nazmi] There is an emigration movement, even though most countries do not give entry visas to Iraqis. But there are facilities for Christians, especially through the Western church, to ensure that they can emigrate abroad.

OMAN

Minister Discusses Gulf Security, Mediation

92AE0249A London AL-HAWADITH in Arabic
14 Feb 92 p 39

[Interview with Omani Minister of Information 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rawwas by Usamah 'Ajjaj in Cairo—date not given]

[Text] Omani Minister of Information 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Rawwas took part in the conference for the information ministers of the Islamic countries recently held in Cairo. AL-HAWADITH interviewed him there regarding several issues, including Oman's contribution to achieving an inter-Arab reconciliation, security arrangements in the Gulf, the mediation between Egypt and Iran, the conclusions drawn from the crisis of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and other issues.

['Ajjaj] The Sultanate of Oman often plays a prominent role in inter-Arab reconciliations in view of Oman's desire to never burn its bridges with any party. Do you

believe that this is an appropriate time to seek reconciliation, after the crisis of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is over?

[al-Rawwas] Our Arab relations are certainly not seasonal; rather, they are as everlasting as history. Our care for these relations is a solid and fundamental principle of our foreign relations. The attitude of the sultanate and of Sultan Qabus is to support Arab causes and to preserve the Arab countries' interests. Sultan Qabus set an example of this attitude when Egypt signed Camp David agreements with Israel; the sultanate did not break its relations with Egypt. We regarded Egypt's retrieval of its land as part of solving the Arab-Israeli conflict, restoring all the occupied Arab territories, and the Palestinian people obtaining their inalienable and just rights. We wish for the current talks at the peace conference to begin where the Camp David accords ended—in a general, international atmosphere striving for peace and stability.

[Ajjaj] What is the situation with regard to inter-Arab reconciliation in the present circumstances?

[al-Rawwas] With regard to this case, we call for dealing with it with a comprehensive Arab action, so that there will be willingness to review the effects of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, which has directly or indirectly affected the progress of Arab development. We call for an Arab dialogue alongside self-appraisal by each party, but not on the basis of the traditional saying "let bygones be bygones." There can be no serious action without a factual review that would call a spade a spade in light of new criteria. The Sultanate of Oman is seeking to clear the Arab air, but not at the expense of violating any of the Gulf countries' rights that have been seriously affected by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait.

[Ajjaj] There has been some confusion regarding the unified Gulf army that Oman proposes, but which was not endorsed at the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] summit in Kuwait. What is the truth of this subject?

[al-Rawwas] First, discussion of this matter began at the Higher Security Committee, which is chaired by Sultan Qabus. This was according to a request by the Gulf summit before last, which was held in Doha. The committee discussed the question of Gulf security on all levels and from all aspects—political, social, economic, and military. In their talks, the participants focused on the military aspect without paying attention to other aspects. After the committee completed its research, investigation, and studies, Sultan Qabus submitted his report to the recent summit in Kuwait. We would like to assert that we are absolutely not seeking to impose any particular views. We have done what we have been asked to do. We support whatever the Gulf leaders would agree upon. As far as we are concerned, the matter ended here.

[Ajjaj] What about Damascus Declaration and the possibility of implementing it? Is there any contradiction between it and any other proposals for Gulf security arrangements?

[al-Rawwas] We believe that Damascus Declaration is a fruitful nucleus on which we can build on a sound foundation, because it contains specific commitments. I disagree with those who say that it is contradictory to other proposals. The idea of a unified army has been explained in detail to all the brothers participating in the Damascus Declaration.

[Ajjaj] What about some of the Gulf countries concluding military agreements with Washington? I refer to Kuwait in particular.

[al-Rawwas] We believe that every country has the full right to defend its security and sovereignty in the manner it deems fit, according to Article 51 of the UN Charter, and to make the decisions that suit it.

[Ajjaj] What about Iran's participation in any security arrangements in the Gulf?

[al-Rawwas] We believe that Iran is an Islamic neighbor, and because of its geographic position, we share with it the Strait of Hormuz. Let me tell you that we are reassured by Iran's intentions and its geo-strategic orientations.

[Ajjaj] Has the Omani mediation between Egypt and Iran stopped?

[al-Rawwas] It has not stopped, but mediation is like two sides of a scale. It cannot progress in one direction without progressing on the other. It is not customary to talk about mediation matters in the media, but we are exerting fruitful efforts and seeking ways to bring views closer together in order to achieve common interests. We are confident that Egypt and Iran respect one another's efforts and are fully aware of each other's capabilities. There might be signs that do not point in this direction, but what has been disrupted during a decade and a half cannot be restored in one year or so. We are not trying to abbreviate or make short work of time. We want to make sure that reconciliation is founded on a sound basis and to ensure that it will last.

[Ajjaj] We wonder whether there are any problems between Oman and the United Arab Emirates [UAE]?

[al-Rawwas] I can assure you that, whatever the biased people say and how numerous the begrudged ones become, the fact of the matter is that there are no problems between the two countries. We care about the prosperity and stability of the sisterly UAE. We will not allow anybody to fish in troubled waters, just as we will not allow anybody to infiltrate Gulf unity, which has become our greatest desire.

[Ajjaj] Let us return to the lessons learned from the crisis of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and how can we overcome this trauma.

[al-Rawwas] As I have already said, the matter calls for a review by all countries and all parties. The invasion has distorted many facts, and the matter calls for psychological and mental readiness for this review. It also calls for

this review to have a basic role in the present circumstances, which require taking collective action. Benefiting from the Kuwait disaster requires formulating a new Arab vision of the coming new stage, based on relations of mutual respect, equality, and interests.

[Ajjaj] What about Oman's relations with the countries of the new Commonwealth [of Independent States]?

[al-Rawwas] The Soviet Union has become part of history. We are seeking to establish equitable relations on all levels with the Commonwealth countries that replaced the Soviet Union. We are looking forward to building bridges with them and to having relations on the basis of mutual respect, noninterference in internal affairs, and common interests. We have no sensitivities and are not hesitant in our endeavor.

[Ajjaj] Can you evaluate the outcome of the conference of the Islamic countries' information ministers, which you recently attended in Cairo?

[al-Rawwas] The conference of the Islamic countries' information ministers certainly came at a time when the Islamic nation was stronger and more in solidarity than it was before, particularly since the general international situation has provided solid ground for exercising Islam's tolerant action. Islam is open to all ideas and to exchanging views on all subjects with a spirit abundant with brotherhood, amity, and tolerance. We believe that there is great need for such meetings in order to project Islamic magnanimity and to serve the divine message in the manner the Almighty wishes us to do.

Draft Law Requires Banks To Increase Capital

92AE0249C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
20 Feb 92 p 10

[Text] Muscat—AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that the Omani Central Bank has begun drafting a new law obliging banks operating in the sultanate to increase their capital.

Central Bank officials said the BCCI [Bank of Credit and Commerce International] crisis, which the Sultanate dealt with by offering a substantial financial aid to Dhofar Omani-French Bank in order to enable it to acquire BCCI, has provided an opportunity to benefit and to learn many lessons that should be taken into consideration.

The Dhofar Omani-French Bank recently (prior to signing the BCCI deal) increased its capital from 10 million Omani riyals to 15 million riyals. The Oman International Bank also increased its capital by 2 million riyals to 14 million riyals.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that a committee of banking experts has begun drafting new regulations for bank operations in the sultanate, with the intention of ensuring the banking sector's safety and strengthening the banks' financial position.

Experts believe that increasing banks' capital might prompt some of the banks to merge and enable them to overcome the difficulties now arising with the position of foreign shareholders in local banks, and the extent to which the percentage of their shareholding can be reduced or abolished in order to facilitate the merger process.

A year ago, the Omani Central Bank called on banks operating in the sultanate to merge, since their number had increased to 22 banks, in addition to specialized banks, a number which were incompatible with the volume of economic activity in the sultanate.

Despite the Central Bank's call for expediting the merger process, it left the matter to the banks to discuss among themselves and work out practical arrangements whereby the number of banks in the sultanate should not exceed 10 strong banks competing among themselves for a suitable market share.

The Central Bank had then announced attractive incentives for the merging banks, such as depositing interest-free government funds for a five-year period and offering discounted loans and other incentives.

The Bank said it has laid a plan to intervene after a one-year grace period if there are no signs that the banks have succeeded in overcoming the problems obstructing the merger upon which the Central Bank insists.

Dhofar Bank Acquires BCCI Branch

92AE0249B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
17 Feb 92 p 9

[Text] Muscat—Hammud Bin-Sanjur, executive director of the Omani Central Bank, announced that all assets and liabilities of all branches of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] in the Sultanate of Oman have been sold to Dhofar [Zufar] Omani-French Bank as of 15 February 1992.

Under the agreement, the purchasing bank, which is a local bank, should refund 57 million Omani riyals—the total of the BCCI's obligations and liabilities to the depositors and creditors—within 30 days. Thereby, the Sultanate of Oman will be the first country in the world where depositors and creditors will receive their dues in full, without having to contribute to the deficit in the bank's budget resulting from its mismanagement abroad.

The deal received great financial and moral support from Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id, the Sultan of Oman, since the financial assistance he provided covers a great part of the liabilities to the depositors. This would enable the Dhofar Omani-French Bank to meet its obligations to the depositors and, at the same time, continue its activities. A statement issued by the Omani Central Bank yesterday said that Sultan Qabus's noble deed is intended only to end this crisis, but under no circumstances will it be repeated in any similar conditions that might arise in the future.

The statement lauded the Dhofar Omani-French Bank, which won the deal, the value of which has not been revealed. It said that it is a qualified and capable bank and has the necessary resources to meet all its obligations and liabilities toward the other parties.

The statement said that BCCI depositors and bank customers will be notified of the date when the Dhofar French-Omani Bank will begin processing their banking transactions.

Nur-al-Din Nahwi, director of the purchasing bank, said: "The sale contract provides that the Dhofar Omani-French Bank will reopen all of the BCCI's 11 branches 30 days after the date the contract goes into effect on 15 February." The bank said that it will do all it can to open the first branch after only two weeks, to be followed by opening a branch every day or two. Every depositor will then be able to withdraw his money within mere minutes, immediately after the reopening.

Hammud Bin-Sanjur, executive director of the Omani Central Bank, said Oman's BCCI sale deal is distinguished by the fact that the depositors will receive their deposits in full—100 percent—without bearing any of the losses incurred as a result of bank mismanagement abroad.

He said that the customers will receive their funds as they stood on 6 July 1991, and up to the date the sale contract was signed on 15 February 1992, the period during which the bank's operations were suspended and the bank was not making any profits.

In the meantime, the Central Bank asked the citizens and institutions which borrowed from the former BCCI to note that loans and interests they owe the bank up to the date of sale have been fully transferred to the Dhofar Omani-French Bank and, therefore, they have to cooperate with the management of this bank in order to meet their obligations.

Speaking at a press conference held at the Omani Central Bank yesterday, Hammud Bin-Sanjur said that the former BCCI Muscat branch's liabilities and obligations is estimated at 57 million Omani riyals (\$1.482 billion) while the value of its assets and investments total 10 million riyals (\$26 million), but part of these assets is invested or placed in deposits outside the sultanate. As for the assets, they are estimated at 40.7 million riyals, given as loans to local businessmen. Therefore, Sultan Qabus' contribution has helped in resolving the crisis, without having to wait for the outcome of liquidation operations now being carried out in London, which are expected to take a long time.

Hammud Bin-Sanjur affirmed that the assistance that his majesty the sultan offered is an exceptional gesture intended to resolve this problem in view of its extraordinary circumstances, but such action will not be repeated if a similar problem occurs in the future. He said the decision to deal with any bank is a personal one. Every citizen must realize that he should be careful when

making such a decision. The banks must also take precautionary measures and act in accordance with the banking laws in order to protect themselves.

With regard to the Omani Central Bank's plan to merge commercial banks in the sultanate, Hammud Bin-Sanjur said: "Probably this [BCCI liquidation] will be the first step toward merging, since the number of local banks has already been reduced by one."

He said that the bank has taken several steps to encourage local banks to merge in order to form larger financial blocs. Meetings have been held with directors of local banks, who were offered a number of incentives by the Central Bank and the Omani Government.

With regard to hastening completion of the BCCI sale to a local bank, he said: "The objective of expediting the sale is to enhance confidence in the banking system and to protect the depositors who are no longer able to withdraw their funds in order to manage their affairs, without having to wait for the international settlement, which might take a long time and which might not enable the depositors to retrieve all of their money."

SAUDI ARABIA

Government Agencies Offer Positions to Women

92AE0257B Jiddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic 27 Feb 92
p 4

[Text] Riyadh, Saudi Press Agency—The Public Civil Service Bureau has announced an increase in non-teaching positions for women in a number of government departments, for which women with the following qualifications and skills are sought:

- A university degree in chemistry, physics, biology, livestock husbandry, nutrition, food and agricultural industries, general major, agricultural crops, livestock production, economics, accounting, management, sociology, social service, psychology, and library science;
- A two-year post-secondary diploma in management, employee affairs, financial affairs; or in the field of nutrition or research;
- A one-year post-secondary diploma in the field of transcribing in two languages, or in computing;
- A six-month post-secondary diploma in transcription;
- A six-month diploma with competence in transcription.

Acceptance for these positions will begin Saturday, 3 Ramadan 1412, until the end of the business day on Wednesday, 14 Ramadan 1412 [7-18 March].

The first week, from Saturday, 3 Ramadan, until the end of the business day on Wednesday, 7 Ramadan, will be for the following specializations:

Chemistry, physics, biology, livestock cultivation, nutrition, food and agriculture industries, agricultural crops, livestock production, psychology and library science.

The second week, from Saturday, Ramadan 10, 1412, until the end of the business day on Wednesday, Ramadan 14, 1412, will be for the following specializations:

Sociology, economics, accounting, social service, and management; and for holders of specialized diplomas.

Female students may apply during official work hours in the bureau's branches and employment offices in the following cities:

Riyadh, Jiddah, Dammam, Abha, Madinah, al-Ta'if, Tabuk, Qasim, al-Ihsa, al-Jawf, Ha'il, al-Baha, Najran, Jizan, and Hafr al-Batin.

The bureau asks those graduates interested in applying for these positions to bring the following documents to the employment offices:

- Graduation certificate giving the stipulation of passing, cumulative [grade] average, and class rank;
- Accompanied by civil affairs card, or identity card;
- Certificates of experience or training, if any.

The bureau also asks women with the above qualifications to report to the bureau's branches or employment offices. They must renew their applications if they wish to get a job.

SABIC Views Ventures, Investments, CIS

92AE0242A Jiddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic 16 Feb 92 p 5

[Interview with Ibrahim Bin-Salmah by Muhammad Bin-Hilal: "Industrial Venture for Polyester Production in Yanbu'"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Mr. Ibrahim Bin-Salmah, deputy board chairman and appointed member of the Saudi Arabia Basic Industries Company (SABIC), announced that SABIC shall soon establish new companies in Yanbu' to produce polyester.

In an interview with AL-MADINAH, Bin-Salmah added that there are plans to market the product in the Commonwealth [of Independent] States [CIS], the former Soviet Union, and emphasized that SABIC's production will be based on meeting local consumer needs and exporting the surplus to foreign markets. Following is the text of the interview:

New Industries

[Bin-Hilal] What plans does SABIC have for setting up new ventures?

[Bin-Salmah] SABIC plans to establish new companies in the near future in Yanbu', in partnership with Saudi joint-stock companies. Last week, a contract was signed

to set up a polyester-manufacturing company to provide the basic material for industrial textiles, including carpets.

The production capacity of this venture is between 130,000 and 150,000 tons of polyester a year, which will cover much of our raw material needs for the manufacture of textiles and will afford the private sector the opportunity to set up industrial textile factories. This venture is the first stage of three industrial complexes to be set up in Yanbu' for the same purpose.

Expansion Goals

To a question about SABIC's goals to double its companies' production through expansion, he said: "Actually, we in SABIC want to consolidate the kingdom's industrial base, with respect to SABIC, in Jubayl and Yanbu'. In Jubayl, we are currently expanding many of the companies with a view to raising output in order to lower costs, thus improving our competitive edge in world markets. As you know, Jubayl and Yanbu' have all the key facilities. As we expand, management will not grow in proportion to the output expansion, thus lowering production costs, enhancing our competitive edge in world markets, and bolstering the production source for world competition inside the kingdom."

Exporting Fertilizers

About the compound fertilizer industry, the SABIC deputy board chairman and appointed member said: "We have designed compound fertilizer factories on commercial bases, not only for the kingdom's needs, but for export as well. We are now meeting the kingdom's needs for these fertilizers, as well as the needs of some neighboring countries. Meanwhile, we have also started to export. SABIC's goal is to meet the kingdom's needs, not only in the foreseeable future, but in the distant future as well."

Tenth Anniversary of Custodian's Ascension to Power

On the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the ascension of King Fahd, the Custodian of the Two Holy Sites, to power, Mr. Bin-Salmah said: "I believe that my words cannot begin to express this occasion that we all treasure, but my memory takes me back to the date that represents the beginning of the actual industrial boom in the kingdom. At the same time, it was the actual beginning of commercial production at the SABIC complexes in Jubayl, and the kingdom in general. As you know, this is an occasion dear to our hearts, which began with growth and development, not only at the local level, and not only at the Arab level, but at the Islamic and world levels as well. This is the major starting point for the kingdom, not only in terms of development, but in terms of all aspects of life as well."

Joint Investments

Asked whether SABIC intended to Saudi-ize these companies completely, he said: "SABIC's standing principle is to participate with all companies, be they Saudi or foreign."

"The world economy is now tending toward globalism, economic blocs, and investment affiliations between various world communities and corporations. Thus, it is not in anyone's interest to undertake investments independently. Interests call for partnerships, both with Saudis and others. This helps to raise investments in various ventures. Instead of having sole ownership of ten firms, one can own 25 or 30 firms in partnership with others."

SABIC's Opportunities in CIS

[Bin-Hilal] Does SABIC have any plans to enter the new CIS markets?

[Bin-Salmah] We have always had some contacts with industrial institutions in the former Soviet Union and have undertaken certain business initiatives. At the same time, we now believe there are opportunities for future industrial cooperation between us and those independent republics.

We have dispatched a team of SABIC advisors to study these opportunities and decide which of them can be put to good use

[Bin-Hilal] Do you anticipate any marketing problems and conflicts with the EEC, should you enter these new markets?

[Bin-Salmah] I do not believe that marketing conflicts and problems will arise between us and the EEC in the new Commonwealth, because trade among nations must always be free. Therefore, I reiterate that we do not anticipate any conflicts between us and these countries.

Report Discusses Maritime Transport System

92AE0234B Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 12 Feb 92
p 22

[Article by Amal al-Husayn: "Saudi Ports Total 39 Percent of Gulf, Red Sea Ports, Receive 68 Million Tons Annually"]

[Text] The transportation sector plays an important and principal role in man's life and in his economic and productive activities. It provides transportation services and facilities, shares in supporting economic, social, and cultural activities, and works to ensure the availability of consumer goods, production materials, and their continuing influx. In addition, the sector facilitates citizen travel at any time and to any place. It was the state's wish to create a mechanism especially for transportation matters. Therefore, since this sector is extremely important to commerce and the economy, a royal decree was issued announcing the creation of an agency of the

Ministry of Communications for transportation affairs. Its tasks were to regulate and supervise all means of transportation, except aviation. In 1976, the General Ports Administration was established and separated from the Ministry of Communications. Saudi Arabia's excellent geographic location allows it to be in the forefront of international trade and transportation, in view of its long coastline. Of the ports on the Arab Gulf and the Red Sea, 39 percent, i.e., 22 out of 56 ports, are Saudi, including the Islamic port of Jiddah, Dammam, and Yanbu', in addition to the commercial port of al-Jubayl and the port of Jizan. Moreover, the kingdom has other ports on the western coast and the Arab Gulf to encourage coastal transportation, provide goods to neighboring areas, provide services for the fishing sector, and help in developing the regions supporting these ports. They are Haql, al-Khuraybah, Duba', al-Wajh, Umm Lajj, Rabigh, al-Lith, al-Qunayfidhah, al-Qummah, and Farasan on the Red Sea coast; and Darin, al-[Khabr], al-Qatif, al-Sa'ir, and Ra's Abu Qumayyis on the Arab Gulf.

Production Capacity

In this regard, it is worth noting that Saudi ports have been provided with the most modern equipment in order to attain high levels of productivity in handling goods. The daily off-loading capacity for one pier in a port is more than 1,000 tons on average. These ports are capable of unloading more than 75 million tons per year, as there are 174 existing piers to receive goods in these ports, capable of accommodating 174 ships at one time. As of the end of 1987, this was 30 percent of the total number of piers in Arab Gulf and Red Sea ports; the total number of piers is 579. These piers are classified as general merchandise piers and passenger piers, as well as piers for livestock, grain, dry goods, petrochemicals, cattle, fruit, natural gas, and crude oil.

Since the start of the comprehensive economic and social development activities in the kingdom, with the beginning of the first five-year development plan in 1970-1971, Saudi Arabia sensed the importance of the ports when they became crowded with ships as a result of increased imports from the outside world to fulfill the kingdom's requirements. Broad investments had begun in all areas, and the civil sector also begun to expand, in keeping with the laws of the economic and social phase, causing a movement aimed at developing economic resources and constructing the infrastructure of the national economy. The capacity of the ports then was about 9.7 million tons per year. At the present time, Saudi Arabian ports can accommodate more than 68 million tons per year. This makes clear the extent of development in the kingdom's ports. They are firmly tied to the national economy's activities, as the entrance and exit points for exports and imports. It would be impossible to increase the volume of exports unless this increase was accompanied by ports capable of doing the job. Although this relationship with the ports was at first one-sided, it is now two-sided, embracing exports as well as imports. Exports have a major role in industrial and

agricultural activities, and in the national economy as a whole. Without exports, the economy could not be balanced. The percentage of imports through the ports is approximately 90 percent of the kingdom's total imports and 72 percent in terms of value, while more than 95 percent of the kingdom's total exports go through the ports.

Commercial Imports

Saudi Arabia's commercial imports in 1985 totaled 29 million tons, which decreased in 1986 to 27 million tons, i.e., a drop of 2 million tons. This decrease was due to a drop in imports of construction materials. Approximately 55 million tons of goods were handled in 1986, while in 1987, 65 million tons of goods were handled, an increase of 18 percent over the previous year. This was due to a rise in volume of exports through the industrial ports, to more than 35 million tons, an increase of 36 percent compared with the previous year. The volume of exports through commercial ports also rose to 3.4 million tons, an increase of 92 percent over the previous year. As for imports, they decreased by 4 percent in 1987. Moreover, the movement of exported and imported goods through the kingdom's ports during 1987 increased. Exports rose to 60 percent of the total of all goods dealt with, while imports declined to 40 percent. In 1988, more than 68 million tons of goods were handled, which is an increase of 3 million tons over 1987. In 1988, exports increased by 8 million tons, while imports decreased by 5 million tons. We also note a rise in percentage of exports to 69 percent and a decline in imports to 31 percent of the total.

Infrastructure for the Saudi Fleet

Saudi Arabia's fleet is composed of 109 vessels over 100 register tons, with a total capacity of 2,374,986 register tons. Its total tonnage is 4,137,556 tons. Some 52 percent of this fleet, i.e., 57 vessels, is considered capable of deep-water navigation. The rest are capable of close-in navigation only. Despite the fact that the Saudi fleet covers more than 20 types of specialized purposes, ships transporting liquids make up 69 percent of fleet capacity, while dry transport totals 24 percent. The dry transport fleet has 31 vessels, covering most dry transport functions, while the other units cover close-in transportation.

Transportation Sector's Local Accomplishments

Concerning accomplishments of the transportation sector on the local level, intense and ambitious activity occurred during the present decade in all industrial, commercial, and social fields, which led to increased volume of imports to satisfy the requirements of development plans implemented by the state. As a result of that, total goods unloaded in Saudi Arabian ports rose from 10.5 million tons in 1975 to 34.8 million tons in 1989. As a consequence of this development, the maritime fleet was developed and its tonnage increased. Its cargo was 1 million tons in 1977, and there were 19 maritime companies and agencies. By 1984, cargo had

increased to 5.6 million tons with a total of 472 ships. The cargo stabilized in 1989 at 2.74 million tons, with 312 ships and naval units. The share of goods transported in Saudi Arabian bottoms continued to increase. The Saudi fleet occupies first place among Arab nations' fleets in terms of cargo, and second with regard to number of ships.

Saudi Arabian National Company for Maritime Transport

The Saudi Arabian maritime commercial fleet would not have been developed but for our government's wise conviction regarding the importance of the maritime transportation sector and its encouragement of Saudi capital to establish national maritime companies and agencies. The state shared in the founding of the Saudi National Company for Maritime Transport with capital of 2 billion [riyals], some 25 percent. It is considered the kingdom's national maritime line. This company owns eight ships, with tonnage of 200,000 tons. It carries general cargo, livestock, and petrochemicals.

Gulf Level: United Arab Shipping Company

Saudi Arabia participated in establishing the Arab Shipping Company in 1976, along with five other Gulf nations—Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Bahrain. It was capitalized at 500 million Kuwaiti dinars. The kingdom's share was 19.3 percent, and the Saudi Arabian flag presently flies over 10 of the company's 48 ships.

On the Arab Level

Along with seven other Arab nations, Saudi Arabia helped to establish the Arab Maritime Company for Oil Transport in 1973, with capitalization of \$500 million. The purpose was to achieve transportation integration along with marketing and Arab oil industries. The company owned 10 oil tankers with a total tonnage of 2.5 million gross tons and, at the present time, it owns five tankers with a tonnage of 314,493 tons. In addition, the kingdom is a member of the Arab Academy for Maritime Transportation, represented by the Ministry of Communications.

On the Islamic Level

Saudi Arabia has endorsed the idea of creating the Islamic Federation of Ship Owners. The purpose of this organization is collective coordination of Islamic nations' efforts to confront the intense competition of foreign maritime federations, and to defend the interests of these Islamic nations, so that they may transport a fair share of world trade shipped by sea. The Islamic federation is also working to link its nations with foreign nations in an integrated shipping network. Saudi Arabia has also lent one of its qualified citizens to be the federation's first general secretary.

International Level

Saudi Arabia has not been remiss in joining international organizations and agencies concerned with matters of shipping and maritime safety, in order to help raise levels of efficiency and development. The most important organizations include the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the International Labor Organization. Saudi Arabia attends meetings of these organizations, participates effectively in their committees and deliberations, and carries out their resolutions and recommendations aimed at the development and growth of the commercial fleet, providing safety elements for ships and personnel, and safeguarding the process of transporting and handling cargoes. Saudi Arabia has ratified several international shipping treaties and agreements, concerned with maritime transportation, and operates in accordance with their rules and regulations.

Qualifying and Training National Maritime Cadres

Because the human element is the true resource for developing the maritime transportation sector, and in order to maintain the accomplishments achieved by this sector in Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Communications has invested considerable care and attention to preparing national maritime cadres trained in all aspects of maritime transportation. The Saudi Government, represented by the Ministry of Communications, was one of the first Arab states to participate in establishing the Arab Academy for Maritime Transportation in 1972. A number of Saudi students were sent to matriculate there and become qualified through education and practical training. They were encouraged to do research and studies in accordance with the most modern academic systems in all maritime fields. Saudi graduates are now working in the Ministry of Communications, the General Ports Administration, and at certain Saudi shipping companies and agencies. Because it was the ministry's wish to increase the number of specialized Saudi maritime cadres; raise their competency; and keep up with the latest maritime management methods, arts, and sciences; it decided to send several graduates to specialized international maritime institutes and academies. Accordingly, some of its most qualified personnel were sent to the International Maritime University in Malmö, Sweden, to obtain more advanced training in maritime studies. The ministry, in coordination with the agencies concerned, is currently studying the possibility of including some maritime programs and studies in Saudi technical colleges and institutes. It has also attempted to open a department of commercial shipping in the King Fahd Maritime College in al-Jubayl. The ministry shared in efforts to open a shipbuilding engineering department in the King 'Abd-al-'Aziz University in Jiddah.

Accomplishments of the Maritime Transportation Sector

1. Expansion and development of the Saudi commercial fleet, including encouraging investment in the maritime

transportation sector and cooperating with Gulf, Arab, and Islamic nations in establishing joint shipping companies, such as the United Arab Shipping Company, the Arab Maritime Company for Oil Shipment, and the Islamic Federation of Ship Owners; Expanding the fleet also included the ministry's cooperation with other agencies concerned.

2. Developing and raising efficiency levels of the Saudi commercial fleet, including the signing of international treaties and agreements of the IMO and UNCTAD, as well as developing and raising the competency of the maritime inspection fleet, registering ships and regulating other maritime vessels, and training the national maritime cadres by establishing the Arab Academy of Maritime Transportation and through the International Maritime University; Saudi Arabian ports also come under the heading of developing and raising fleet efficiency.

3. Support for and stimulation of the national fleet, through creating a fund to subsidize maritime transportation by offering loans to buy new ships or for use by 100-percent Saudi-owned maritime transportation companies and agencies, in exchange for low service fees; These loans are financed by levying annual fees on Saudi ships commensurate with their age. Restoring the subsidy on ship fuels and diesel oil for Saudi ships is being considered, which would be commensurate with participating with Saudi capital. Consideration is also being given to government-guaranteed loans offered by Saudi banks to Saudi maritime transportation companies and agencies to purchase new or used ships. In addition, preference would be given to transporting non-oil goods—either exports or imports—in Saudi ships. Maritime conferences are committed to the 40-40-20 ratio for Saudi Arabian national ships that operate on lines regulated by them. An advisory council was established for Saudi maritime shippers, which is concerned with protecting the rights of Saudi shippers vis-a-vis other parties, including maritime conferences, insurance companies, and shipping agencies. Support should also be given to the idea of creating a national academy for maritime transportation to teach, train, and graduate ship officers, captains, and maritime engineers.

Figures on SMARC Oil Product Exports for 1991

92AE0242C Jiddah 'UKAZ in Arabic 7 Feb 92 p 4

[Article: "Petroleum Products Transported by SAMAREC Fleet Amount to 178 Million Barrels"]

[Text] Refined petroleum products shipped to international markets by the SAMAREC [Saudi Marketing and Refining Company] fleet in 1991 amounted to about 178.12 million barrels.

The refined products shipments varied from pure refined products to crude and fuel oil, in addition to liquified oil gas [presumably liquified natural gas].

This amount transported by company-owned and leased carriers represents a 38,500,786-barrel increase over 1990.

It is noteworthy that SAMAREC owns four supertankers with a combined payload of 174,296 tons, and leases up to 25 maritime carriers a year, as needed.

Comparison of Petroleum Products Transported in 1990, 1991

Product	Barrels Transported in 1991	Barrels Transported in 1990
Pure Refined Products	95,677,450	73,668,460
Crude Oil	54,570,081	46,762,275
Fuel Oil	16,702,480	13,554,243
Liquified Gas	11,171,150	6,130,307
Total	178,121,161	140,115,285

Hospital With 500 Beds Slated for National Guard

92AE0257A Jiddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic 14 Feb 92 p 3

[Article by Husayn Khammash in Dammam]

[Text] His Royal Highness Prince Mushari Bin-Sa'ud Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, National Guard representative in the Eastern Province, has announced that this year's "good works [khayr] budget" includes a public hospital project in the city of al-Ihsa for National Guard personnel. It will have 500 beds.

His highness said that this hospital would cover most medical specialties in order to offer the finest therapeutic and preventative services.

He indicated that the choice of al-Ihsa for the hospital site was made after careful study, to suit the distribution of hospitals in the cities of the Eastern Province and the population density of each city.

He confirmed that National Guard projects in the Eastern Province enjoyed the support and attention of the custodian of the two holy places, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and his highness his faithful crown prince, may God preserve him.

Sodium Carbonate Plant To Be Built in Jubayl

92AE0242B Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 1 Feb 92 p 9

[Article by Walid al-Farraj]

[Text] The Saudi Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the eastern region is preparing a field study of joint industrial investments. The study will explore joint experiments in Saudi Arabia, the eastern region in particular, in light of the Saudi investment climate and the

policy of promoting joint industrial investments, and will assess the negative and positive aspects of such experiments.

It is common knowledge that joint investments have been a distinguishing feature of the last three decades at the global level, helping to transfer capital and technology to the countries of the world, Third World countries in particular.

Also, preparations are under way to establish a sodium carbonate plant in Jubayl in cooperation with a Dutch company. The plant's production capacity is 250,000 tons per year, at a total cost of 908 million Saudi riyals, or \$127 million.

Duba' Port Set To Accept Heavier Traffic

92AE0234A Jiddah AL-MADINAH in Arabic 1 Feb 92 p 2

[Article by Ahmad Shahin: "Duba' Port, Shining Light in North; Project Set To Operate Amid Popular Joy"]

[Text] The port of Duba' is nearly ready. A new morning dawns in the Tabuk area, while the new port fronts onto the Red Sea, a gateway for the transit of its products to all corners of the world.

The project of managing the Duba' port was submitted for public bidding after completion of its basic equipping, which cost 100 million Saudi riyals. Despite the fact that the port's management was offered for competitive bidding, the port has already achieved success because of the vital role it played during the Gulf crisis, when Duba' was used as an oil port to fulfill civilian and strategic needs.

In Jiddah, the director general of the General Ports Administration, Engineer Muhammad 'Abd-al-Karim Bakr, confirmed that the project to operate Duba' port was opened for public bidding after completion of the basic equipping. He said that this project's importance shows the concern of the custodian of the two holy mosques' [King Fahd] government to facilitate the transit of goods and materials and to tie in the north-western region of Saudi Arabia, which contains promising agricultural and mining components. He added that this port will serve all those who deal in the area of transporting passengers and merchandise, because it will have a positive affect on the costs of transportation and will decrease expenditures for transporting commodities and exports.

People Will Be Thankful

The General Ports Administration set 10 November 1991 as the date to open the [bid] envelopes, and management of the port will be done through the private sector. On this occasion, the people of the Tabuk area expressed their profound gratitude and appreciation to the custodian of the two holy mosques, may God protect

him, and to his crown prince, praying to God that they enjoy good health and well-being.

The citizens of the Tabuk region also directed their extreme gratitude to Prince Fahd Ibn Sultan Ibn 'Abd-al-'Aziz, governor of the Tabuk region, for his efforts on behalf of putting the commercial port of Duba' into operation. They expressed this clearly during his highness' inspection tour of Duba' early this year, when he demonstrated his intense interest in getting the port into operation. On this visit, the prince was accompanied by the minister of state and chief of the General Ports Administration, Dr. Fayiz Badr.

The western coast of our kingdom now features an important economic achievement, which will have important economic dimensions and effects on the prosperity of the northwestern region, and the Tabuk area in particular. It will be a source of great prosperity. There are numerous major indicators of this project's economic feasibility, including establishing a maritime company to operate ferries and steamships between the commercial port of Duba' and the Egyptian ports of Suez and Safaja, in addition to the free zone and industrial zone in the city of Duba', and the creation of thousands of job opportunities in the port of Duba'.

Serving the Hajj

Moreover, Duba' port will considerably facilitate the hajj, after the hardship and difficulty faced by pilgrims during their journey to and return from the port of Nuwaybi', inasmuch as the port of Duba' will shorten the pilgrims' trip by thousands of kilometers.

It has been agreed to operate the port of Duba' through the Saudi-Egyptian Committee, which has recommended expediting a maritime line between Duba' port and the Egyptian ports of Suez and Safaja. The port of Duba' contains seven piers, each 600 m in length. Work was completed on them five years ago and, when in operation, each can accommodate three ships simultaneously. The port is capable of handling a total of 700 million tons of merchandise annually.

Duba' port is 180 km from the Tabuk area, and 25 km from the city of Duba'. The General Ports Administration is still adding certain types of equipment to the port, as well as connecting electricity and telephone services. A number of General Ports Administration workers are currently at the project site, led by the new director of Duba' port, Eng. 'Atiyah al-[Muwaylhi], who is from Duba' and who has been the supervising engineer of the port from the start.

Entrance of First Oil Tanker

The new port's first trial operations were very successful during the Gulf crisis. Trial operations began on 12 January 1991, with the entrance of an oil tanker to test the special equipment to accommodate and unload oil

tankers. Then port operations began, and it was converted into a temporary oil port. The number of oil tankers operating at that time was raised to seven instead of the normal three.

Sugar, Drugs, Chocolate Scheduled for Production

92AE0257C Riyadh AL-RIYAD in Arabic 27 Feb 92
p 25

[Article by Ibrahim al-[Qurnas]]

[Text] The Ministry of Industry and Electricity has issued a number of decisions to build new installations, with completely Saudi capital, to cost 764.6 million Saudi riyals.

These projects include the establishment of the United Sugar Company in Jiddah, with Saudi capital of 476.4 million riyals, to produce 500,000 tons of both powdered and granulated sugar, and 150,000 tons of molasses.

"Saffola," to produce and package dates in Jiddah, with a total capital of 160 million riyals and a productive capacity of 20,000 tons of packaged dates, 1,500 tons of date syrup, 3,875 tons of liquified sugar, 2,000 tons of vinegar, and 2,000 tons of yeast.

Saffola for Chocolate Production in Jiddah, has a total capital of 91 million riyals, and a productive capacity of 6,000 tons of chocolate.

Al-Batarji Factory for Medicine and Medical Supplies in Jiddah has a capital of 37.2 million riyals and annual productive capacity of 6 tons of antibiotics, 3 tons of infiltration medicine, 2 tons of tranquilizers, 1.2 tons of hormones, 2.1 tons of indigestion medicine, 4.5 tons of rheumatism medicine, 2.4 tons of skin medicine, 6 tons of eye drops, 1.8 tons of diarrhea medicine, 5.4 tons of vitamins, and 1.6 tons of serums and vaccines.

SUDAN

Al-Bashir on Iran, Libya, Other Issues

NC1303093792 Cairo MISR AL-FATAH in Arabic
9 Mar 92 p 3

[Interview with Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, chairman of the Sudanese Revolution Command Council for National Salvation (RCCNS) by MISR AL-FATAH correspondent Mahmud Bakri in Khartoum; date not given]

[Text] [Bakri] Our first concern, as always, is Sudan's relationship with Egypt. How do you assess the current status of this relationship, particularly in light of [RCCNS Deputy Chairman] Major General al-Zubayr Muhammad Salih's recent visit to Egypt?

[al-Bashir] We constantly hope for and seek to have excellent relations with Egypt. We try to avoid all matters that might have an adverse effect on these relations. We believe that in the wake of brother al-Zubayr's visit

and the agreement to form two committees—one to discuss political and security issues and the other for border issues—we have bypassed all sensitive issues in our relationship.

[Bakri] Is a visit by you to Egypt or a meeting with President Mubarak in the offing?

[al-Bashir] This depends on the results of the committees' work. If they achieve their objectives, there will be an opportunity for a meeting.

[Bakri] What, in your view, are the principles on which the ties between the two countries can be based and in such a way that these ties will not again be affected by passing events?

[al-Bashir] All dealings between the two countries must be clear. Neither side must interfere in the other's internal affairs. We must also focus on the numerous fields in which we can develop our relations and seek to avoid all the negative matters that might cause friction and adversely affect our relationship.

[Bakri] Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's recent visit to Sudan has worried some of your neighbors. What is the scope of the Sudanese-Iranian relationship, particularly in light of the reports that Sudan is getting assistance from some Iranian Revolutionary Guards and military experts?

[al-Bashir] Every country has the right to seek to develop its relations with any other country. I do not believe that any country would intentionally spoil its relations with other countries unless it had patriotic or national reasons to do so. The Iranian president's visit followed an invitation, which we extended to him. We are particularly concerned with developing our relations with Iran. It is a country with capabilities, status, and influence in regional and world events. All countries are currently seeking to develop their ties to Iran, including Saudi Arabia. Many senior Saudi officials, including the foreign minister, have visited Iran. The Saudi authorities have also extended several invitations to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to visit the Kingdom. The Egyptian foreign minister has made remarks about improving ties to Iran and recently measures were taken to restore diplomatic relations between Morocco and Iran. As for us, we are also trying to improve our relations with Iran in the context of cooperation. Reports claiming that we will become a center for terrorism, that we will seek the assistance of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, or that Sudan will be a substitute for Lebanon [as a base for the Revolutionary Guards] are part of the hostile campaign that seeks to damage Sudan's reputation.

[Bakri] In your speech to the National Transitional Council you said that you will turn over a new leaf in relations with some Arab countries, particularly in the Gulf. On what will this new chapter in relations be based?

[al-Bashir] It will be based on respect for each country's sovereignty and independence. Every country has the right to adopt the stands that suits its policies. No country should dictate certain stands to another. We want to have mutual respect.

[Bakri] Iraq is being subjected to an all-out embargo even though the Gulf war has ended. How do you assess the UN Security Council's treatment of Iraq?

[al-Bashir] The UN Security Council is vulnerable to bad U.S. influence. The council resolutions are partly American decisions, which the United States tells the council to approve. The problem is that when Iraq developed into a military power, the United States decided to destroy it.

[Bakri] The Libyan Jamahiriya has also become a target. There is a growing possibility that it may become a target of aggression. What will Sudan's stand be if Libya is targeted?

[al-Bashir] We have cautioned against pressuring Libya since the outset of the Gulf crisis. In the past, we have said that what happened with Iraq would be repeated with other Arab states, particularly those seeking independence. Naturally, we will stand by our Libyan brothers in the event of such a crisis.

[Bakri] Arab parties are engaged in U.S.-sponsored negotiations with Israel. Do you believe that these negotiations will produce results in connection with the restoration of Arab rights?

[al-Bashir] In fact, the result will be negative because more Arab rights will be lost.

[Bakri] How do you view these talks?

[al-Bashir] All earlier rounds of talks have shown that the Arabs will achieve nothing in these talks. The Israelis are not prepared to make any concessions; they still reject the land-for-peace principle. Given that, what can they offer Arab states?

[Bakri] One of the points taken against the National Transitional Council is that it was set up in an undemocratic manner. Do you believe that the council truly represents the Sudanese people?

[al-Bashir] Anyone who knows Sudan and aware of the names, selected elements, and the approach adopted for that choice will know without a doubt that the council truly reflects the will of the Sudanese people. The representation takes into account all the geographic and class factors for all Sudanese people. Moreover, the council enjoys all the legislative and control authorities over the executive power and its members enjoy the necessary immunity to perform their tasks. Furthermore, the council enjoys the right to veto the president's decisions. It is known that the council embraces heads of trade unions. In its present formation, it is much better than previous councils.

[Bakri] Sudanese opposition forces claim that you have sealed mouths and suppressed freedom of expression at a time when you control all mass media. They say that you forbid them from communicating with the Sudanese. They describe the regime as a sort of dictatorship. What is your reaction?

[al-Bashir] Anyone who listens to London radio (the BBC) has undoubtedly heard former prime minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi as he talked to foreign radios and expressed himself without restraint. If you go to Friday prayers in al-Qubbah mosque, you will find al-Mahdi giving sermons to worshipers. He also writes in the newspapers. Where is the lack of freedom of speech?!

[Bakri] Where are your efforts to solve the south problem? How did your relations with some of your neighbors affect the rebel movement in the south?

[al-Bashir] We are continuing with the negotiations that have been arranged by Nigerian President Babangida. Our delegation was ready to participate in the talks but they were halted because of a division in the rebel movement. We have contacted brother President Babangida and told him that we are ready to negotiate at any time. The improvement in our relations with our neighbors has certainly had an effect on reducing the rebel's ability to move.

[Bakri] Which countries are currently providing the rebel movement with aid?

[al-Bashir] Most of the aid has stopped. Kenya is sheltering the rebel command and is allowing weapons and equipment to be transported across Kenyan territory. It is just about the only country now helping the rebellion.

[Bakri] How are you dealing with the Kenyan regime in light of its support for the rebels?

[al-Bashir] I met President arap Moi in Lusaka and we discussed the issue frankly. We agreed to hold a meeting between officials from the two sides to discuss the issue and agree on certain matters that could limit the rebel movement's scope of action.

[Bakri] It is possible that the rebel movement, which has caused so much suffering in Sudan, may end?

[al-Bashir] What is certain is the need for negotiations to be the basis for reaching a peaceful solution to the problem in the south. People must sit together as soon as possible to stop the fighting. We hope that peace will prevail in the south soon.

[Bakri] Prices in Sudan have risen very sharply and the people are suffering from the high cost of living. What have you done to overcome Sudan's chronic economic problems?

[al-Bashir] We have drawn up a three-point program for economic salvation. This program is based principally on the liberalization of the Sudanese economy. We know that liberalization leads to a high rise in prices and have

taken the adequate measures. We are convinced that the solution for the Sudanese economy lies in increased production. Production cannot be increased without giving producers the incentives to increase productions. Liberalizing prices is an incentive for the producers. We used to impose prices on agricultural products and take delivery of them through [state] organs. These policies were a burden to producers.

We are an Islamic state that is preaching justice. We are working to compensate the poor sectors that have suffered from price increases. We have already raised the minimum wage to 1,800 Sudanese pounds per month and set the minimum pay for pensioners at 1,200 Sudanese pounds per month. The minimum pay for pensioners when we took over authority was 10 Sudanese pounds. Poor families also get aid from the solidarity fund and the income from the alms tax. There are now 500,000 families benefiting from these wages. We always take the social dimension into consideration and are always working to help the poor.

Former Premier Hits al-Bashir Regime

PM1703150592 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
13 Mar 92 pp 1, 4

[Mu'awiyah Yasin report: "New Sudanese System Does Not Guarantee Freedom or Human Rights"]

[Excerpts] Khartoum—Former Sudanese Prime Minister al-Sadiq al-Mahdi has described the regime of Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, who deposed him in June 1989, as lacking credibility. He said that the new political system the regime wants to build was "more like an expanded municipal council" and would never guarantee basic liberties or human rights.

Al-Mahdi, leader of the Ummah Party, admitted that there were negative aspects to the practices of the Sudanese parties, but he pointed out that the three democratic regimes that ruled Sudan performed better than the three military regimes which ruled that country. He warned that no party "with limited support" can solve Sudan's problems by imposing "its views by force."

In a 15-page handwritten statement handed by him to AL-HAYAH at his home in Omdurman, al-Mahdi said that, because of social and educational backwardness, the parties, in playing their roles, "maintained a high degree of religious and partisan loyalty to certain entities."

He defended the records of the Ummah Party and the Democratic Unionist Party led by Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani. [passage omitted]

Criticizing Lt. Gen. al-Bashir's regime, he said that al-Bashir had announced that he wanted to base his political system on commitment to the principles of slavery only to God, freedom, freedom of expression, justice, equality, unity, and serious work. "Where are

these principles in Sudan today? These claims are the best proof of the lack of credibility. We are used to hearing such slogans and principles in similar circumstances, but they and the truth are too far apart."

He said that the political pyramid system in support of which Lt. Gen. al-Bashir launched his campaign last week ignored the role of the unions and the press. He added that people "who wanted to attend basic conferences were the target of arrest, displacement, pursuit, and threat campaigns. They have no freedom. The election and promotion measures will, at all stages, be subject to those in control." That was apparently a reference to the National Islamic Front, which supports the Sudanese regime.

The Ummah Party leader described the people's conferences system, which is similar to the current system in Libya, as limited in power and, therefore, "more like an expanded municipal or rural council." He said that the Libyan experiment had faced many obstacles, and although it had developed in accordance with the country's circumstances, "it still has many shortcomings such as the conflict between the various revolutionary and political organs and the tendency to resort to adventure and improvisation, and so on."

In his statement, which was originally written for publication in a Sudanese Government paper but was turned down, al-Mahdi said that the new political system "neither guarantees the basic public liberties and human rights nor does it guarantee free competition and honest elections and promotion."

He described that system as "a carbon copy of the totalitarian systems but under a different name and with the same fate." [passage omitted]

Accord With Iraq on Educational, Cultural Cooperation

EA2902102592 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1740 GMT 26 Feb 92

[Text] Khartoum, 26 Feb (SUNA)—An agreement on the implementation of an educational, sport, and cultural cooperation program between Sudan and Iraq was signed today on behalf of the Sudanese side by Professor Ibrahim 'Ahmad 'Umar, minister of higher education and scientific research, and for the Iraqi side by Mr. 'Abd al-Razzaq Qasim al-Hashimi, the Iraqi minister of higher education and scientific research.

The Iraqi minister told SUNA that the program had 33 items on the agenda for the 1992-1994 period. He said under the program cooperation between the two countries' universities, institutes and research centers would be extended. He said Iraq had allotted 100 scholarships annually for studies at universities and higher institutes in various specialties, in addition to 10 scholarships for postgraduate studies. Iraq would also contribute towards

the Arabization of the Sudanese universities by providing the [Sudanese] national Arabicisation board with copies of Arabicised Iraqi books.

Mr. Hashim Ubayd, secretary general of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research [post as received], said the Iraqi side had declared its readiness to provide Sudan with printed matter and news letters on Iraq's experience in the eradication of illiteracy and in adult education. His excellency said the two sides had agreed to celebrate both their respective national days and to conclude a protocol on cooperation in the sphere of youth and sports between the Iraqi Olympic Committee and the [Sudanese] Ministry of Youth and Sports, as well as on cooperation by the fields of the various media, culture and science.

Government Begins Southern Offensive

92AF0479C London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 29 Feb p 1

[Text] Nairobi—Well-informed diplomatic and military sources have confirmed that the Sudanese Government has launched its military campaign in southern Sudan with a military move from Malakal, which is expected to be followed by other moves, especially in the area of the besieged town of Juba.

The sources said that the forces that moved from Malakal carried out heavy shelling of the Adum region, which observers expect to soon fall into the hands of the regular forces, after which the road to al-Nasir, the stronghold of the group that split with John Garang, will be opened.

The objective of targeting the areas under the control of the Riak Mashar and Lam Akol group is not clear, particularly since the government had held several rounds of secret talks with this faction, trying to reach an agreement of cooperation in order to weaken Garang.

Officials in the Garang movement had earlier expressed their belief that the Sudanese Government will first launch an attack on the areas under the control of Mashar-Akol group, since it is militarily weaker. They said that the Mashar-Akol forces will not be able to withstand a large-scale attack by the government forces. Garang forces, they said, will not intervene unless Mashar forces ask for assistance.

Military forces that spoke to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT said the ground in some operational areas of the south are still underwater and, therefore, the government's campaign there might be delayed eight to 10 days.

The Sudanese Government had massed a division consisting of three brigades under the command of Maj. Gen. Sayyid Ahmad Hamad in order to move it to the area of operations in the south. The military sources said that this division's mission will be to take part in breaking the siege of Juba. This division consists of

forces from different areas that were assembled in Khartoum to be transported to the south.

In a related item, yesterday in Nairobi, Capt. [Mayum Koj] announced his resignation from the Mashar-Akol wing and criticized the agreement between this wing and Khartoum.

Notes on Armed Groups Operating in Country

92AF0478A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 20 Feb 92
p 8

[Article by military editor: "Opposing Military Forces in Sudan"]

[Text] The current overall number of the Sudanese Armed Forces is estimated at 110,000 men, including 5,000 in the air force, a few hundred in the navy, and the rest (about 65,000) in the army. Of this total, it is estimated that 30,000 men are operating in actual combat units.

These forces currently have about 300 tanks, 200 of which are Soviet-made T-54/55 combat tanks, 20 Chinese-made Type-59 combat tanks (Chinese version of T-54/55), 20 American-made M-60 combat tanks, and about 80 Chinese Type-62 light combat tanks.

In addition to that, the Sudanese Army employs about 400 Chinese, Soviet, American, French, Egyptian, and British armored vehicles; 200 field guns and rocket launchers of various calibers; and a few hundred mortars, anti-armor guns, and anti-aircraft guns of various calibers. This is in addition to surface-to-air AA missiles, which include the Soviet SA-2 and its Chinese version, CS-A-1, the Soviet SA-7 missile, and the shoulder-launched American Redeye missile.

While Sudanese naval equipment is limited to a small number of patrol, escort, river patrol, and light-landing boats; the air force has 60 fighters, three of which are MiG-23s that Sudan received as a gift from Libya a few years ago; 12 MiG-21s; 18 J-6s, the Chinese version of the MiG-19; 12 J-5s, the Chinese version of the MiG-17; 3 American-made Tiger F-5 fighters; and 6 British-made Strike Master training and assault support aircraft. This is in addition to 20 helicopters of various types and a small number of medium- and light-transport aircraft and training, liaison, and multi-mission aircraft.

It is noteworthy, however, that much of this gear, the main and heavy equipment in particular, including tanks and fighter aircraft, is plagued with a chronic shortage of spare parts, ammunition, and maintenance and outfitting services, thus greatly affecting their combat readiness and their operational use and serviceability.

Sudanese People's Liberation Army [SPLA]

There is no confirmed information about the real strength of the military units belonging to the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement and its military arm, the SPLA, particularly following this army's split into two

wings: a pro-leadership faction under the command of John Garang, and a break-away faction under the command of Dr. Lam Akol and Dr. Riyak Mashar.

The total number of SPLA personnel is estimated at about 55,000, but it is almost certain that this huge number is highly inflated, and the more likely number may range between 20,000 and 25,000. It is also likely that about 10,000 to 15,000 of these may be considered semi-regular or full-time combatants, while the remaining elements are classified as militias—local armed elements, and tribesmen who can be relied on in case of general mobilization in the ranks of the SPLA followers and partisans in areas under its control in southern and eastern Sudan. Moreover, estimates indicate that, out of the full and part-time military forces, about one-third (between 3,000 and 5,000 combat personnel) joined the wing opposed to Colonel Garang, while the others remained loyal.

SPLA units are primarily equipped with light and medium weapons appropriate to their operational style of guerilla warfare, particularly automatic rifles, machineguns, anti-armor rocket launchers, anti-armor guns, and anti-aircraft guns. The SPLA's gear, however, also includes a few T-54/55 and T-59/62 tanks captured from government forces in previous engagements, in addition to armored vehicles. The SPLA also has artillery units that have field guns, howitzers, light anti-armor missiles, and Redeye and SA-7 shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles.

Unconfirmed reports indicate that the SPLA, in the last few years, may have acquired a limited number of US shoulder-launched Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, which are more sophisticated and effective than the SA-7 and the Redeye, which it used to have, bearing in mind that the army is still receiving military aid from several regional and international sources. It seems this situation is likely to continue into the future.

Partisan and Tribal Militias

It is certain that the armed-militia phenomenon has markedly grown in Sudan in the past year. The most important militia presently is the National Islamic Front [NIF] under the leadership of Dr. Hasan al-Turabi.

There is no accurate NIF information yet about the size of the NIF's armed organization or about its efficacy and efficiency. Arab and regional estimates, however, say that the NIF now has the ability to deploy between 3,000 and 5,000 fairly-trained armed personnel. Other sources say that the Islamists can, whenever necessary, mobilize a large number of up to 20,000 elements and outfit them with various light and medium weapons, including automatic rifles, machineguns, missile launchers, mortars, anti-aircraft guns, and shoulder-launched anti-aircraft missiles.

While the NIF currently maintains a close alliance with the current Sudanese military government under the leadership of 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, many sources

agree that the NIF's armed organization enjoys the backing of the Sudanese authorities, be it in a direct official fashion or in other non-official forms. There is also a widespread belief that the NIF and its armed organization receive backing and training from Iran. This is at a time when reports (as yet unconfirmed) increasingly suggest that Iran recently dispatched Revolutionary Guard elements to oversee the training and outfitting of the NIF along the lines deployed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard in backing Hizballah elements in Lebanon. This information points out that the number of Iranian elements in Sudan recently reached several hundred advisors, consultants, and training officers.

Besides the NIF, there are also armed organizations and quasi-organizations belonging to Sudanese tribes and factions scattered all over the country. It is certain that the militia and armed-organizations phenomenon in Sudan is likely to grow and spread greatly in the next stage. The same goes for these organizations' alliances and their divergent local, regional, and international relations.

State Confiscates al-Mirghani Property

92AF0479B London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
1 Mar 92 p 1

[Article by Sayyid Ahmad Khalifah]

[Text] Jiddah—The Sudanese Government has implemented its decision to confiscate the al-Mirghani family property. It has dispatched small military units to a number of houses, offices, and projects belonging to the al-Mirghani constituency in Khartoum, Khartoum North, and other towns and villages in southern and eastern areas of Sudan. The decision applies to some farms and orchards, as well as to the large al-Mirghani garden on the Nile bank in Khartoum.

Sudanese sources said that the decision also applies to offices belonging to the al-Mirghani family in the al-Taka building in the capital center. However, the decision does not apply to the Islamic Bank, which belongs to the al-Mirghani family and other shareholders. It is not known whether the confiscation decision has been legalized, whether it has registered the property in the name to the Sudanese Government, or whether the action is merely a feeler and a threat to test the reactions.

The confiscation decision was due to Muhammad 'Uthman al-Mirghani's opposition to Lt. Gen. al-Bashir's policies, but the confiscation decision which former minister of information 'Abdallah Muhammad Ahmad threatened to make last year was suspended because of the contacts that were then underway with Ahmad al-Mirghani, who at the last moment changed his mind about returning to Sudan after receiving advice from personalities at home and abroad. A [Democratic] Unionist [Party, DUP] source said that some of the leaders of the al-Khatimiyah sect and the DUP in Khartoum were notified of the confiscation several

months before Lt. Gen. al-Bashir issued an official decision. It was Dr. Hasan al-Turabi who informed them about the decision before it was issued.

Committee Questions Human Rights Abuses

92AF0475C London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 18 Feb 92
p 1

[Article by Mu'awiyah Yasin]

[Text] A spokeswoman for the UN Committee on Human Rights in Geneva has confirmed to AL-HAYAH that the committee will hold a closed session today (Tuesday) to look into complaints submitted to it against the government of Sudanese President Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir, accusing it of large-scale human rights violation. While the chief of the Sudanese judiciary has denied the accusations, a Sudanese opposition leader has said that "lying, too, has become a feature of Sudanese Government policy."

The spokeswoman said that the committee, which has 53 member countries, will look into the complaints submitted against the Sudanese Government on the basis of Proceeding 1503, issued by the international organization's socio-economic committee. She explained that Khartoum had received a file containing these complaints, though she refused to disclose further the significance of the complaints or the parties that had submitted them. She did, however, reveal that the committee had reviewed a similar file last year; she refused to reveal the decision that had been made in that regard.

Sudanese Response

AL-HAYAH learned that the new Sudanese Minister of Justice, Dr. 'Abd-al-Sami' 'Umar Ahmad, currently visiting Geneva, will be in charge of responding to the charges made against his country's government.

The head of the Sudanese judiciary, Judge Jalal 'Ali Lutfi, gave a speech before the committee yesterday, in which he explained that the government of Lt. Gen. al-Bashir had corrected the mistakes that had been made by former president Ja'far al-Numayri, with reference to applying laws derived from Islamic law [shari'ah]. He mentioned that the present criminal code in Sudan (since March 1991) is not applied to Christians and animists in the south of the country.

Judge Lutfi told the committee that his country's government had not imposed shari'ah "of its own accord; rather, it was the demand of the Muslim majority, which considers Islam a religion and a state." He said that the Constituent Assembly (Parliament), which the present regime dissolved in June 1989, enacted Islamic criminal law on the second reading, "which means unanimity on it, because the third reading was devoted solely to correcting small errors in the formula and printing."

He conceded that the government had not organized the public referendum on the subject that Lt. Gen. al-Bashir had promised to organize after taking power following a military coup, but he subsequently denied having made press statements to that effect.

Lutfi said that there were no political prisoners in Sudan, "nor is there torture. I have visited every prison in Sudan, and no prisoner has given me any complaint in this regard, and I do not say that to flatter the government." He admitted that there were several security agencies, "but they are unified."

Instances of Torture

However, Mr. Faruq Abu-'Isa, Secretary General of the Federation of Arab Lawyers, informed AL-HAYAH from his residence in Cairo that he had submitted a complete file to the [UN] Committee on Human Rights, which contained instances of death under torture. He alluded to the killing of physician 'Ali Fadl, teacher 'Abd-al-Mun'im Salman, an engineer from the Halfa region in the extreme north of Sudan, and instances of torture in prison. He cited the case of the Sudanese physician Fath-al-Rahman Hammudah, the cases of detention since June 1989, the continuing civil war in southern Sudan, of which has been called a violation of southern citizens' right to life, and also the practices of government-supported militias in the Darfur region of western Sudan.

Abu-'Isa added that the complaints advanced against the Sudanese Government were "many times more than those advanced against other countries, whose governments will submit to questioning before the committee in Geneva." He described what Judge Lutfi had said before the committee as being "part of the course of untruth on which the government is proceeding." He said that Lutfi was "a tool being used by the National Islamic Front, which supports the regime, and would pay a high price for his deeds."

NIF Influence in Transitional Assembly Cited

92AF0479A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
24 Feb 91 pp 1,4

[Article by 'Uthman Mirghani]

[Text] London—The new National Assembly, whose 302 members the government appointed 10 days ago, will be inaugurated today in the presence of Arab, Asian, and African delegations.

Despite the fact that the assembly members were appointed and not elected, the Sudanese Government is attaching great importance to this event, considering it as part of its plan to gradually phase out the Revolutionary [Command] Council and to give the regime a civilian character.

Yet independent and opposition quarters consider the new assembly a mere facade to divert attention from the

aggravating problems and the regime's internal and external isolation. These quarters say the government has failed to attract prominent personalities from the opposition political parties.

The distinguishing character of the assembly's structure is its inclusion of a large number of the leaders and cadres of the National Islamic Front [NIF], which gives the impression that the NIF has finally come into the open and decided to take control of the new "legislative" authority. Among the prominent NIF leaders appointed to the assembly were 'Uthman Muhammad Taha, deputy of NIF leader Hasan al-Turabi; Dr. Muhammad Yusuf Muhammad; Dr. Taj al-Sirr Mustafa; Ahmad Mahjub Hajj Nur Muhammad 'Uthman Mahjub; 'Abd-al-Rahim Hamdi (the current finance minister); Ahmad al-Rida Jabir; and Muhammad Salih al-Karuri.

More than 47 members of the new assembly belong to the NIF and previously occupied NIF offices. In fact, some of them were members of the Constituent Assembly (parliament) during the last democratic era.

Among the latter group, the name of Muhammad Yusuf Muhammad stands out. He was speaker of the Constituent Assembly during the democratic era.

The official newspaper AL-INQADH [AL-WATANI, NATIONAL SALVATION] recently published a statement by Muhammad strongly attacking democracy and all the previous parliaments in Sudan, and praising the new National Assembly, saying that it will be "more comprehensive and more representative." Also, the Maoists, who collaborated with former president Ja'far Numayri's regime, are prominently represented in the new assembly. They include names such as Badr-al-Din Sulayman, 'Izz-al-Din al-Sayyid, al-Sharif al-Tuhami, al-Nil 'Abd-al-Qadir Abu-Qurun, and Ahmad 'Abd-al-Halim, who all played significant roles in the era of former president Ja'far Numayri and who now have entered the new assembly.

Also noteworthy is that in the future, the new assembly will adopt the same organizational foundations on which the NIF's internal structure is based. Just as the NIF organization is based on a "National Congress" or "consultative assembly," the members are chosen by election and by elevation from the level of urban neighborhoods and villages to that of urban neighborhoods and countryside councils, and then up to the level of province conferences within the National Congress. The new assembly adopts a similar method in elevation from the neighborhood committees, to countryside level, to provincial level, to regional level, and then to the National Assembly.

Nation's Economic Woes Recapitulated

92AF0479D London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
27 Feb 92 p 10

[Article by al-Sirr Sayyid Ahmad]

[Text] Riyadh—Informed economic sources expect Sudanese exports this year to drop substantially. Export revenues are expected to reach \$250 million, versus a \$600-million [annual] average export revenue before Lt. Gen. 'Umar al-Bashir's government took power in 1989.

The sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the drop is due to several reasons, such the drop in prices of raw and semi-raw materials in world markets; the decline in production; the Sudanese Government's foreign relations, which have led to certain markets being closed to it; and its domestic economic policy, which has been characterized by contradiction and rash changes of decisions, not allowing for time to absorb those policies and act in accordance with them.

Sudan's top export is cotton, followed by gum arabic and peanuts. The sources said that cotton, for example, has been affected by the policy of dedicating larger areas of irrigated land for the production of foodstuffs such as wheat. Commodities such as beans, gum arabic, and sesame seeds also suffered from the continuing drought, particularly in western Sudan, which is the main area for these crops.

Estimates indicate that cotton production will be around 400,000 bales. With the surplus from which the world cotton market has been suffering, estimated at 5 million bales, and the improvement in the situation of supplies to major customers, such as China, the estimated revenue is expected to range between \$80 million and \$100 million from the sale of [alakala] and [shambat] cotton types, that are inherently competitive.

Traditional cotton revenues were normally double this amount. Early this month, London witnessed an auction of a Sudanese cotton deal worth over \$20 million, which could only bring less than \$1 million.

As for gum arabic, revenue from it could reach \$60 million to \$80 million. But the basic problem with this is that revenue from gum arabic comes in small bursts over a long periods of time. The remaining revenues could come from sesame seed and livestock exports and, to a certain extent, from peanuts, the quality of which has deteriorated to the extent that exporting large quantities of it is no longer possible.

Additionally, exporters suffer from increasing production costs and conflicting policies, according to sources, who said that the continuing drop in the Sudanese pound's exchange rate during the year contributes to the rise in costs. The change in policies is also considered another frustrating factor for exporters.

Last October, the Sudanese Government announced devaluation of the Sudanese pound by 233 percent for the incentive rate, and 145.9 percent for the official rate. This was accompanied by the announcement that a third money market called the "alternative market" [suq al-tajrib] had been established. It was said that the aim is to liberalize exports and lessen demand for the dollar. Accordingly, exporters are allowed to keep 50 to 60

percent of the revenue from export sales in hard currency in a special account that allows them to dispose of it. Early this month, the pound was once again floated, which means devaluing it by about 200 percent and, consequently, increasing production costs and exacerbating inflation. In the meantime, the "alternative market" has been abolished.

With regard to the IMF [International Monetary Fund] delegation's recent visit to Sudan, the sources pointed out that every member state has the right to ask the IMF to send a mission in order to look at its financial performance, with a view to evaluating such performance.

The sources said that the government's recent program pays no attention to the other side of the issue, namely the need to provide foreign aid or increase exports while tightening expenditures, so that the measures taken are meaningful. But, the sources added, even if the IMF were convinced by the new policies, it will not again lend to a debtor country.

It is known that Sudan's debts to the IMF are the largest, exceeding \$1.2 billion. Even if Sudan was able to repay these debts and entered into an economic consolidation program in agreement with the IMF, the laws which the IMF recently adopted recommend that the country concerned should implement the program for one year before the IMF comes forward to help it. This is because experience has shown that certain countries sign an agreement with the IMF and continue with it for a few months, after which they will receive loans, but later ignore the rest of the program. The sources concluded by saying that all the IMF does is issue a certificate, which the country takes and then contacts the donor governments in order to obtain the funds it needs. Within this context, it is not enough to look at the economic aspects. Rather, the political relations between the country and the donor country become the basis.

Economic Agreement Signed With Malaysia

92AF0579B Khartoum SUNA in English 20 Feb 92 p 5

[Text] Khartoum, Feb 20 (SUNA)—The Sudan and Malaysia have Thursday signed a non-dual taxation agreement. [sentence as published]

The Minister of Finance, Abdel Rahim Hamdi, signed on behalf of the Sudan government, whereas, the Malaysian Finance Minister, Anwar Ibrahim signed on behalf of his government.

The Minister of Industry, Dr. Taj El Sir Moustafa, the Ministry of Finance's State Minister, Abdu Alwabb Ahmed Hamza, and the Sudan ambassador to Malaysia, Omer Mohamed Yassin, attended the signing.

The agreement aims at co-ordinating the taxation policies between the two countries and eradicating the dualism within the context of the two countries' efforts to enhance the economic and commercial co-operation

as well as encouraging investment and movement of capital between the two countries.

Hamdi, in a statement to SUNA, explained that the agreement has tolerated the Malaysian to invest in Sudan and eradicate all the taxation barricades, said Hamdi, adding that they also agreed on the Malaysian concessions to the Sudan and the process of the oil exploration.

The Malaysian delegation and Sudanese officials negotiated the process of oil exploration in several areas and the project of the oil exploration in Sharif and Abu Jabra wells, as well as the rehabilitation of the railways, said the minister, adding that the Malaysian delegation included representatives of Petronas Company of Malaysia.

On the other hand, the Malaysian minister expressed happiness with the signing of the agreement indicating that such an agreement would provide a genuine co-operation in all the economic fields and supporting bilateral relations.

Public Firms Must Deposit Hard Currency

92AF0579A Khartoum SUNA in English 27 Feb 92 p 2

[Text] Khartoum, Feb 27 (SUNA)—Finance and Economic Planning Minister Abdel Rahim Hamdi issued a decision Thursday directing the government's institutions, corporations, and public companies that have accounts in hard currencies at the banks inside and outside Sudan, to open an account in foreign currency at the Bank of Sudan.

Hamdi, instructed all these government's units to immediately transfer all their deposits of hard currency to the account that will be opened at the Bank of Sudan except 10 percent of these deposits.

The decision empowered the central bank to use these deposits when necessity arises.

The decision stipulates that all government's units should immediately provide the Bank of Sudan with any letter of credit they want to open or any urgent obligations they want to meet provided that they would be deducted from their account in the bank.

The Finance Minister said that the decision comes as a continuation to the efforts exerted for promoting the performance at the government's units within the context of the objectives of the Three-Year Economic Recovery Programme.

Labor Unions To Be Dissolved, Reformed

92AF0475B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19 Feb 92 p 1

[Article by 'Umar Muhammad al-Hasan in Khartoum and Mu'awiyah Yasin in London]

[Text] Sudanese Government sources have told AL-HAYAH that the government of Lieutenant General

'Umar Hasan al-Bashir will issue an order within two days dissolving all of the country's labor unions and professional federations, reducing the number of unions and federations from 45 to 26, in what observers of the local Sudanese scene see as a government effort to prevent the danger of the unions' opposition to any further harsh economic measures unlikely to meet with popular acceptance.

The Sudanese Government has issued new laws regulating groups of workers, bosses, and farmers; providing for the formation of private federations for professionals; supervising the monitoring of professional activity; observing the general rules of each profession, adherence to its ethical principles, and the means provided for its development.

According to information obtained by AL-HAYAH, the 26 unions will be put under the umbrella of a federation comprising the workers' unions. The anticipated measure does not provide for the formation of a federation embracing professional organizations.

Sudanese officials told AL-HAYAH that the decision, which will be announced within two days, would require the siege of the premises of the unions and federations to be dissolved, with security guards posted around them. The government of Lieutenant General al-Bashir had dissolved the unions immediately upon his coming to power in June 1989, allowing them to resume after the passage of four months and the appointment of "steering committees" to administrate them. Unionists said that these committees were made up of supporters of the "National Islamic Front," which supports the government.

But the officials predicted the return of the General Federation of Labor Unions to work. The union was elected before Lt. Gen. al-Bashir's seizure of power, an is led by al-Sayyid Muhammad 'Uthman Jama'. It was remarked that the Sudanese regime appointed three of the union leaders as members of the transitional National Assembly (Parliament).

AL-HAYAH has learned that the new unions are for: workers in land, air, and maritime transport; public transportation; railroads; agriculture; livestock; al-Jazira Project workers; general education; health and medical professions; administrative workers; building and construction; irrigation; post and communications; electricity and water; tourism and hotels; commerce; banks; insurance companies; media and printing; private newspapers (of which there are none at present); food, textile, clothing, and oil industries; economics; finance; accounting; free trades; and loading and unloading cargo.

On another front, Lt. Gen. al-Bashir continued a visit begun two days ago to the city of Juba—the biggest city in southern Sudan—accompanied by a number of senior army commanders. His supporters see the visit as

coming to reassure those loyal to the government that the army is indeed capable of controlling the camps near Juba belonging to the "Sudanese Popular Liberation Army," led by Colonel John Garang. However, the continued siege of the city indicates that the government still faces military difficulties.

Import Regulations on Automobiles Detailed

92AF0475A Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 20 Jan 92 p 11

[On the "Letter from Sudan" page]

[Text] AL-SHARQ has obtained a decree dealing with the vehicle import decision and canceling mandatory [currency] exchange. What follows is the text of the decree issued by the Economic Committee [not further specified].

First: The import of cars is solely restricted to expatriates and diplomatic missions. For an expatriate to obtain the right to import a sedan or wagon, he must change \$8,000 and \$4,000 respectively, and in order to balance between citizens inside the Sudan and abroad in importing cars, the following is stipulated:

1. There are no restrictions on the import of any type of automobile when importing one or two automobiles, on condition that the vehicles are new (no more than two years old). In the case of commercial quantities, the makes imported must be those with accredited dealers.

2. Registration fees have been set according to engine power, measured in cubic centimeters. One dollar will be paid for every cc; for example, a Toyota Corolla engine is 1,300 cc, and will cost \$1,300 to register, in addition to customs fees.

In order to encourage the import of small vehicles, trucks, and buses, it was decided:

A. To exempt motorcycles, sedans, and trucks with engine power of up to 600 cc;

B. To exempt completely any truck or bus of three or more tons (including lorries and trucks), or [to carry] 26 passengers or more, from registration fees;

C. To give a 50-percent exemption from registration fees for any engine from 106-1,300 cc.

D. Any sedan or station wagon with engine power of 1,200 cc [as published-presumably 1,300] will pay full registration fees.

4. In accordance with the above, any resident, expatriate citizen, or legal person may import one or two cars in accordance with the following principles:

A. He will pay the registration fees for every non-exempt vehicle.

B. The fees will be paid in dollars, or in the local equivalent, at the price periodically set by the Ministry of Commerce.

C. Any citizen or person importing the automobile will pay the registration fee in the customs agency or upon sale through a dealer.

5. With regard to fuel, all vehicles imported will be studied subsequently. This is with reference to vehicles used for public transport.

Second: In keeping with government policy to liberalize prices, and to seek greater expatriate participation in the nation's economy, it was decided to revoke the compulsory [currency] exchange to make it easier on expatriates, so that they might go ahead and use their money to support the nation. For equal participation between resident citizens and expatriates, the national participation taxes have been adjusted as follows:

- Workers, \$150 per year;
- Employees, \$350 per year;
- Professionals, \$600 per year;
- University professors, advisors, and experts, \$800 per year;
- Businessmen, \$2,000 per year;
- In addition to education, media, and arrival service fees.

Retaining distinctions granted to expatriates according to the terms of the Law Governing Sudanese Workers Abroad of 1989—after the fulfillment of commitments for obtaining an import license for a sedan or wagon for those who have completed their [currency] exchange and who have not obtained an export license, the following has been decided:

1. They will be granted a vehicle import license according to the engine power, without paying any new fee.

2. The increase over license fees granted according to engine power is granted according to a customs exemption in the amount of 20 percent, with the dollar valued at 20 [Sudanese] pounds for this exemption, on condition that the total amount from which he benefits in paying license fees and the customs exemption does not exceed a maximum of \$8,000.

Turning to those people who have begun their [currency] exchanges to import an automobile in accordance with the above rules, they will be able to complete the [currency] exchange to equal the registration fees for the vehicle they plan to import, according to the new rules, proportionate to the engine size.

Third: The Law Governing Sudanese Workers Abroad of 1989 will be amended as follows: cancellation of the paragraph pertaining to automobile customs of 1989, which mandates that customs fees must be paid in local currency on condition of having proved the exchange of the equivalent amount in hard currency through official channels, and substituting [this stipulation] by paying customs fees in Sudanese pounds only, without obligating expatriates to exchange those amounts at the official rate.

Fourth: Cancellation of Paragraph 3A/4, including the condition of rejecting any type of delegation of authority in [customs] clearance or in receiving of the automobile, thus permitting any expatriate to send an automobile and authorize whomever he wishes to clear it or obtain its registration.

Fifth: Cancellation of Paragraph 3A/5, which had read, "not to transfer the title of the automobile until five years after its importation," so that now an automobile title may be transferred at any time.

Sixth: Amending Article 5A of the Law Governing Sudanese Workers Abroad of 1989, so that the amount exempted for obtaining the export license for goods and personal property will be \$10,000 (ten thousand dollars), rather than 5,625 pounds. This means that any expatriate is able to bring with him any goods or personal property, whether as accompanying luggage or cargo, without applying for an import license, within the limit of the above amount.

Seventh: Expatriates who have sent goods or personal property are not obliged to receive them personally. They have the right to send their goods or property to whomever they wish in the Sudan, and pick-up may be made by accredited proxies.

Eighth: Implementation of the above measures takes effect (for expatriates) as of 1 January 1992.

Ninth: Based on the Economic Committee's decision of 10 January 1991, the Bank of Sudan has published an order allowing holders of free [hard currency] accounts to withdraw any amount from their accounts for the purpose of travel abroad, without linking it to an exit visa or tickets. It may also be used for the purposes of making duty-free purchases. The order said, in part: "The customs decision takes effect for a period of three months from the date of issue. With reference to the customs decisions for people who entered the country before the date of the order's publication, they will be considered effective for a period of three months from the date of issue. This will be applied to decisions issued from post offices."

Holders of hard currency accounts may withdraw any amounts in foreign currency from their accounts or those of their immediate family (wife and children) in the form of travelers checks, bank drafts, or cash. Withdrawal may be made by means of form called Personal Withdrawal Form From Free [hard currency] Accounts Only, as long as it bears the name of the account holder, the account number, the withdrawal amount, and date of withdrawal. Holders of personal withdrawal forms may use the whole withdrawn amount, or a portion of it, for the following purposes:

- A journey for him and his immediate family (wife and children); it can be presented as a receipt to the customs authority when he departs.
- Making purchases from the Duty Free Shops, Inc;
- Selling in favor of the free financial market;

- Re-importing the whole amount withdrawn, or what is left of it, into the same account or a different account opened in the name of the account holder. He does not have the right to use it to open another free account.
- Personal Withdrawal Forms are valid for three months from the date of issue.

TUNISIA

Student Federation Conference Excludes Islamist Union

92AF0501C Tunis LES ANNONCES in Arabic
31 Jan 92 pp 8-9

[Article by Khemis [Larfaoui]: "Shining Day for Tunisian Youth, Muslim Brotherhood Defeated"]

[Text] In the wake of its election in the person of Samir Labidi to chair the high-level Constitutional Committee of the World Federation of Students at an extraordinary conference, the General Union of Tunisian Students [UGTE] registered its active and distinguished presence in the proceedings of the 16th conference of the World Federation of Students held 20-26 January in the Cypriot capital of Larnaca. The Tunisian delegation, composed of Samir Labidi, Naoufal Ziadi, Abdelkader Hamdouni, Taher Gargoura, and Amal Djaidi, stood out by its great ability to influence the course of the proceedings and the good reputation that Tunisian students enjoy among the African and international unions.

This huge festival brought together young students of various nationalities and languages from all parts of the world. Representatives of 120 countries and 178 organizations attended, along with large numbers of observers and representatives of regional, national, and humanitarian organizations; as well as diplomats and ambassadors from many countries who tried to support and direct their delegations during the student conference.

Mr. Vasiliou, representing the president [as published] of the Republic of Cyprus, gave the opening address to the large audience. He delivered an eloquent speech welcoming the guests and all those present. He highlighted the vanguard role of young students in progress and development, and the ties of friendship and cooperation between young people of all countries. The conferees then turned to electing the conference leadership.

Tunisia's Victories Begin at Once

As is normal with conferences, the opening involved the election of the presidency of the conference. This process reveals the attitudes and rules of the conference, the balance of forces in it, and the blocs and alliances that might crystallize between various forces. [Female] student Amal Djaidi was nominated by the UGTE delegation and elected to the presidency. This was a good omen for Tunisia from the outset, so that its young people might make known their excellence, their ardor, and their victories.

Decisive Moment: Muslim Brotherhood Expelled

The conference's second stage, which occupied an important part of the proceedings, was the discussion of the report by the Constitutional Committee, chaired by Tunisian Samir Labidi, on the membership and status of the world's student unions. This committee had been carrying on its work for a year, holding many meetings and making field investigations to many countries to consider the membership of 178 student organizations from 120 countries of the world. The conferees approved, by consensus without debate, the membership of nearly 50 organizations that the committee report declared had satisfied the conditions for membership and that were committed to independence and democracy. The UGTE was one of them.

After a majority or minority vote on other student organizations, the Constitutional Committee presented its request that some other organizations be suspended or expelled. This process took a long time. One of the organizations that the Constitutional Committee asked to have expelled from the World Federation of Students was the Organization of Islamists, whom the UGTE had dissolved some time ago. It was present, with persons representing it who had come from Paris and Geneva under the leadership of a coordinator from the Arab Maghreb region. They became enraged at the request of the Constitutional Committee. They wanted to move in force to influence the delegations and conferees not to vote on the proposal, and they distributed huge quantities of books and brochures in various languages.

In response, the UGTE delegation moved with speed, organization, and broadly with all the organizations of the world to respond to their claims and arguments. The representative of the Islamists, without indicating his organization, took the floor to discuss the political situation in Tunisia, ending his speech with an attack, insults, contempt, and threats directed at the UGTE's representative on the Constitutional Committee, Mr. Samir Labidi. Before moving to the vote, he asked the assembled conferees whether there was any organization that backed or supported them or objected to approving the Constitutional Committee's expulsion decision. The representatives of the Muslim Brotherhood union were shocked by the results of the vote, for no organization supported the group. On the question of whether there was an organization that demanded the suspension or expulsion of the Islamists' organization, the UGTE representative took the floor to expose the danger and true nature of these people. His speech was interrupted many times by warm applause from the audience. The representative of the National Union of Moroccan Students took the floor to give a picture of the Muslim Brotherhood's crimes in Morocco and latest massacre these people had organized at the University of Morocco. The conference passed immediately to voting on the expulsion resolution. The decisive moment for excising the cancer from the world student organization came, and the response was a unanimous "yea" without abstentions or reservations—yes to expulsion, and that the UGTE is

the sole, legitimate representative of the Tunisian student movement. The hall rang with applause by the various nationalities and colors at this decision in support of the slogan, "For democracy, independence, and defense of student rights."

Tunisia Crowned During Proceedings and at Close

The next stage of the conference was the election of working committees. The conferees divided into a number of committees to discuss working papers. The division was by regions and numerous special interests, including international relations, information and communications, AIDS and drugs, family planning, volunteer work, international student cultural activity, education, student academic rights and university freedoms, indebtedness, women's rights, and human rights and democratic freedoms. The Tunisian delegation participated in most of these committees, notwithstanding their large number. The UGTE representatives made great efforts to enrich and deepen the discussions. This gained the union the [trust] of all the organizations and delegations and election to three committees: women, human rights, and eradicating illiteracy. Besides being elected to the conference's committees, the union was also elected to be at the head of the International Federation of Students—in other words, to be a member of its executive committee.

Union Official Discusses Mining Sector

92AF0501A Tunis LES ANNONCES in Arabic
31 Jan 92 p 7

[Interview with trade union leader Ahmed Ben Rmila by Tayia Hraghi: "Save the Mining Sector"; place and date not given; first two paragraphs LES ANNONCES introduction]

[Text] Whenever we invite a member of the central union, we usually ask him about a number of problems directly related to the workers' concerns and the situation on the trade union scene. This time, for procedural reasons, we chose to interview Mr. Ahmed Ben [Rmila] about what is happening in the strategic and sensitive mining sector.

To bypass generalities that give an overall but imprecise impression, we wanted this interview to be an indication about a sensitive question on which one assumes there is profound discussion by trade unionists.

[Hraghi] Sector councils normally meet only on sensitive occasions. The sector council of the National League of Mines met recently. Was this due to the severity of the problems the sector is facing?

[Ben Rmila] In fact, the recent sector council meeting on 16 January was held at the normal time under the constitution and bylaws. However, one must state that it was held under delicate conditions involving a government attempt to liquidate the Societe Tunisienne d'Expansion Miniere (SOTEMI), dismissing 514 employees

who had been laid off since 1976. They were transferred to jobs in various sectors with no relation to mining work (anti-erosion enclosures).

[Hraghi] What was the union's position at the time?

[Ben Rmila] We strongly opposed the step, which we considered damaging to a sensitive sector and a blow to the mining sector. We proposed fundamental solutions involving other mining sector companies, such as Djerissa Mines and the Compagnie des Phosphates de Qaf-sah. Strangely, these two companies continued the policy of seconding and refused to provide employment for workers who belonged to the sector and possessed professional qualifications giving them priority. The ministry's excuse at the time was that transferring these workers to other jobs, with the mining sector paying their salaries, would make a profit for the company. Recently, however, the problem was complicated by a decision calling for eliminating the previously-mentioned 514 workers.

[Hraghi] I know that you, as a union center, refused to attend a meeting of the central committee on dismissals to which the government invited you. Don't you think the matter requires clarification?

[Ben Rmila] We reject, in principle, and have rejected in the past, all forms of arbitrary dismissal. Therefore, our refusal to attend the meeting you asked about requires a precise explanation. We indeed refused to attend the meeting, because we believe the matter involves studying the future of these workers, not legitimizing their dismissal. Our correspondence with the Ministry of Social Affairs stated this. We continue to insist on the need to open a serious dialogue about these workers' situation, avoiding the offhand policy that accompanied the closure of their mines.

[Hraghi] The narrowed ministerial meeting coincided with the meeting of the sector council of mining workers. This coincidence seems to show the importance of the question involving the situation of the Compagnie des Phosphates de Qaf-sah. I personally believe the matter is surrounded by some obscurity.

[Ben Rmila] First, the cabinet meeting you mentioned made no decision about the company's future and situation.

Second, the cabinet commissioned experts in the field to provide it with a thorough study and go to the area for observation.

Third, not making any decision about the Compagnie des Phosphates de Qaf-sah seems to leave the door open to holding comprehensive and far-reaching talks with all the affected parties.

[Hraghi] If the question is raised for negotiation, do you, as a union, have the necessary studies and proposals to work through the company's situation?

[Ben Rmila] First, we honestly believe that opening the case for study will pave the way for moving beyond the former offhand policy.

Second, everyone knows that the federation has always entered negotiations armed with thorough studies. In this area, we have through studies prepared by specialists. We believe that serious negotiations dictate this.

[Hraghi] What if the situation we have analyzed remains as it is?

[Ben Rmila] We have established the principle of a general strike in the mining sector to defend the aforementioned dismissed workers and the future of the mining sector as a whole. Nevertheless, we are sure that a sensitive, strategic sector as big as the mining sector requires everyone's attention—basically, the state. So we consider it likely that all the affected parties—basically the union, the operating managements, and those responsible—will be made participants. We have not set a strike date, only because we want to leave the door to negotiations open.

[Hraghi] Isn't the strike decision related to the process of renewing the basic structures? In any case, this is the position of many parties. You have been accused many times.

[Ben Rmila] You know that all the strikes we have called have been successful. Their success proves that the supporters believed in their legitimacy and the justice of the demands. So how is posturing involved? If we insist on carrying out a strike if no solution is reached guaranteeing our rights, that does not mean we have rejected negotiations, for we are committed to the interests of our members.

[Hraghi] And finally?

[Ben Rmila] We hope the government understands the issues being raised by trade unionists and by an organization the size of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT). Don't you see that the problems can be solved without all the tension?

[Hraghi] I was expecting you to turn to the question of direct deduction.

[Ben Rmila] You've beat me to the question. I was going to ask you to stress that trade unionists and the UGTT operating structures are holding fast to their right to bring back direct deduction, which was wrested from them under conditions and circumstances, such that once these were gone, we expected deduction to return as an acquired right.

Budget Increase Required for Railway Sector

92AF0501B Tunis LES ANNONCES in Arabic
31 Jan 92 p 7

[Article by Tayia Hraghi: "Railway—Will Labor Pains Find Their Way to Solution?"]

[Text] A few months ago, the postal sector was feeling the labor pains of restructuring and the position that the parts of society took concerning it—the difference between the position of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) and the supervisory ministry was obvious. Following those labor pains, it seems that the sector most susceptible to future reactions has to be the railway sector.

The problem seems simple on the surface. At their meetings, unionists have complained loudly about two main problems: the reduction in the number of passenger lines and the reduction in funding earmarked for the railroad. Those who know the sector and follow its history affirm that the recent budget was the leanest in railway history, although it is supposed to have shown a constant level, not a decrease. But the problem is much more difficult. Railway employees' fears revolve around the sector's hazy future and the fate of employees, especially new ones, regarding employment and guarantees. The decrease in the number of lines and trains will negatively affect secondings and the form of secondings, as well as the probable fate of redundant workers. Everyone knows that all privatization inevitably opens the door to a gradual reduction in workers through systematic or random firing.

The unionists are expressing the greatest amazement over why there is such a great difference between funding for the metro (approximately 14 billion Tunisian dirhams) and funding for trains (28.526 million dirhams), despite the great difference in services provided by trains and those provided by the metro, whose services are limited to carrying passengers for distances under 33 kilometers. But the heart of the problem is the blow that selling railway lines to private persons will give to social services. The railway sector, like the majority of public sectors (education, health, post office, and social funds) is basically a service sector that affects the economic and social areas. Every idea for restructuring requires deliberation, thorough study, and practical support in order to encourage the sector. In particular, specialists stress the importance of the railway sector on the international, not just the local, level. Several studies that many railway unionists and UGTT people have shown us stress the profitability the railway sector would have if it were given broader attention by the relevant authorities.

The UGTT should have been given a role in its capacity as the largest mass organization and given the social character that distinguishes this organization from other organizations. This is particularly true since most negotiating sessions between unionists and government have stressed the need and importance of putting the major problems on the negotiating table. However, for any negotiation to be useful, the union side (the central union central and the league [not further specified]) must present a complete study with figures on how to promote the sector and guarantee its future by thoroughly reforming it, not legislating its privatization. It

appears—and we hope this is the case—that the communique issued by the UGTT (the Executive Office and the league) falls under this heading. It stressed the need for the UGTT to be provided with all the studies and concepts, so that it could study and consider them, along with a promise that no measures would be implemented before all stages are completed. It was undoubtedly the importance of the railway sector and the possible effects of any privatization operation that hastened the raising of the question at the highest level of the power structure.

Unionists must still be enlisted and railway employees become sensitized. Concord between unionists is the best weapon for saving the railroad and making negotiations successful. It is historically clear that whenever the union side holds together, whenever preparation for negotiating sessions is thorough and deliberate, and whenever workers keep up with new developments, the UGTT wins the round.

Certainly, the sensitivity of the subject invites us to return to the subject, in all its aspects, in order to enlighten union opinion. We promise unionists that we will do this at a later occasion.

Textile Industry Prepares for EEC Change

92AF0484A Tunis REALITES in French
14 Feb 92 pp 22-23

[Article by Salem Guerbouj: "High-Risk Zone"]

[Text] The Tunisian textile industry has no dearth of assets: In addition to a secular tradition, textile businesses in Tunisia have the geographical advantage of operating near a larger consumer market, Europe, where our manufacturers have already established a strong foothold. In the opinion of the most demanding industrial country of them all, Germany, labor is cheap and hardworking. In 1991, the textile sector was responsible for nearly 1.213 million dinars in foreign exchange receipts and created 210,000 jobs, 50 percent of the manufacturing total. Moreover, the sector has enjoyed a decade of rapid growth.

Despite this undeniable momentum, however, the sector suffers from numerous handicaps that could be fatal in the long run if no far-reaching plan of reorganization is implemented in the near future.

Hedi Jilani, president of the Employers Confederation and head of a textile business as well, knows whereof he speaks as he ticks off a number of them.

Megacompetition

The sector is relatively undiversified. Ready-to-wear accounts for over 70 percent of its activities, followed by knitted goods (18 percent). It is not well integrated into the national industrial structure because 60 percent of its exports are the work of offshore enterprises.

Obsolete plants and equipment are combined with weak management, which is only a quarter the size of what one sees in rival European businesses.

Jilani thinks such conditions mean it will be necessary to follow Europe's lead in traditional textile zones threatened by international "megacompetition," particularly stiff in the case of Southeast Asian countries, and adopt a Tunisian textile plan whose short-term goal would be to consolidate the sector's gains. In the long run, this would enable Tunisian manufacturers to reposition themselves on the world market.

Stress

The goal: to remain in the market, meaning the European market, with which Tunisia does over 90 percent of its textile trading. It is a market undergoing rapid change as a result of the combined effect of uniform standards resulting from the creation of the single market and the dismantlement of the multifiber agreement, whose application is increasingly governed by the rules of GATT to which Tunisia now belongs.

Textile manufacturers view the creation of the single market as more of an additional constraint and even a source of stress!

As early as 1978, in order to support its industry in its phase of reorganization and modernization and thus overcome the handicap of high wage costs while regaining its competitive position, the EEC "negotiated" agreements with its main supplier countries, including Tunisia, according to which they would "moderate" imports.

Arrangement

This arrangement has been extended several times, most recently on 24 October 1991 and covering 1991 and 1993. It concerns only two categories of products: cotton fabrics (Category 2) and trousers (Category 6). Other categories are unregulated due to the fact that the quotas established have never been totally used.

The first snag is that real exports never exhaust the quota granted. For example, cotton exports averaged 45 percent of their quotas, reaching a maximum 50 percent in 1990 and dropping to a minimum 34 percent in 1991.

Additional difficulties stem from rules governing origin, a veritable puzzle for Tunisian manufacturers, who sometimes have the impression—particularly in the case of the smaller ones, and they are legion—of negotiating uncharted territory.

The result, as Abdelaziz Cheikhrouhou, president of SITEX [Industrial Textile Company], emphasizes, is that "while the Tunisian textile sector definitely has a vast market, the most important thing is to be competitive in order to derive maximum profit from the potential of that large market."

Back to "Go"

"In their attempt to be more competitive," he adds, "it is in the interest of Tunisian companies to improve their integration and, in order to do so, develop related industries upstream from ready-to-wear, particularly spinning, weaving, and finishing."

Likewise, he correctly adds, self-limitation agreements no longer apply since the European textile industry has already completed its reorganization and modernization.

What is called for now is clearly a return to "Go," meaning the 1976 cooperation agreement.

This must be accomplished all the more rapidly since with the startup of the Single Market on 1 January 1993, Tunisian textiles, which will have to face additional regulations and standards, will not even be out of the starting gate by that time.

What Standards

Actually, as INNORPI [expansion not given] board chairman Ali Ben Gaid indicates in a bulletin, on that date, new terms (standards, directives, and certification) will be implemented in Europe, terms that must be met in order that our products may continue to enjoy access to that important market. Indeed, the Single European Charter stipulates that, for reasons of safety, the Commission on Protection of Citizens' Health and the Environment is authorized to use a higher level of protection as its basis, meaning the bar will be set very high. Likewise, effective on 1 January 1993—tomorrow!—the entire European market will be considered as an existing national market. As a result, manufacturers should be able to have a single line of production for all Community countries, which does present one advantage: They will have to have their products certified only once.

However, things become complicated when shippers cannot agree on what standards should be adopted for products: the standard of a particular country (with the industrial advantages it would imply for that country) or the one adopted internationally? The problem is being solved, but will our manufacturers react in time to the new situation?

Quality: Key Word

One has to admit that Tunisia, adopting a far-sighted attitude that has turned out to be extremely judicious, became aware early on of the stakes linked to this problem and the more generous ones concerning competitiveness, particularly quality.

As early as November 1985, Tunisia began to understand the notion of quality clubs. A national quality plan is soon to be instituted and will end in 1996.

One can understand the importance of such a plan when one realizes that our partners in the EEC are already setting up management procedures ensuring quality control in every department of their companies. At the same

time, certification in the form of a national mark showing compliance with standards is already underway.

At the same time, given the importance of trade with the EEC, INNORPI has mobilized to respond to the need for standards expressed by exporters with the establishment of a "Eurowindow" providing maximum information on European technical regulations, permanent, direct connection with European data banks, the regular publication of information on EEC standards, and so on.

Europe Favorably Disposed

Other forms of action have also been taken: training in manufacturing control, quality control systems, in assistance mastering the quality of export packing, certification in mutual insurance systems, and EEC certification.

In other words, Tunisia is not so badly off in this international megacompetition and its effort to secure a place in the sun in a sector which by itself represents 10

percent of the world's total consumption. But can we therefore let down our guard? To do so would be purely suicidal for an activity on which Tunisia still bases great hopes and that still signifies important opportunities: Our exporters are concentrated in only 3 out of the 12 European countries.

For its part, Europe seems to harbor nothing but favorable feelings. Pietro-Giorgio Mazzocchi, chief of the EEC textile negotiators, has emphasized the need to grant Tunisia a 10-year adaptation period.

Likewise, the Uruguay Round has granted our country a relative advantage compared with our Asian rivals.

However, as Mongi Safra, secretary of state for commerce, has emphasized, only the option of co-development and partnership will pay off in the long run and logically so, since it is the royal path of interdependence!

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